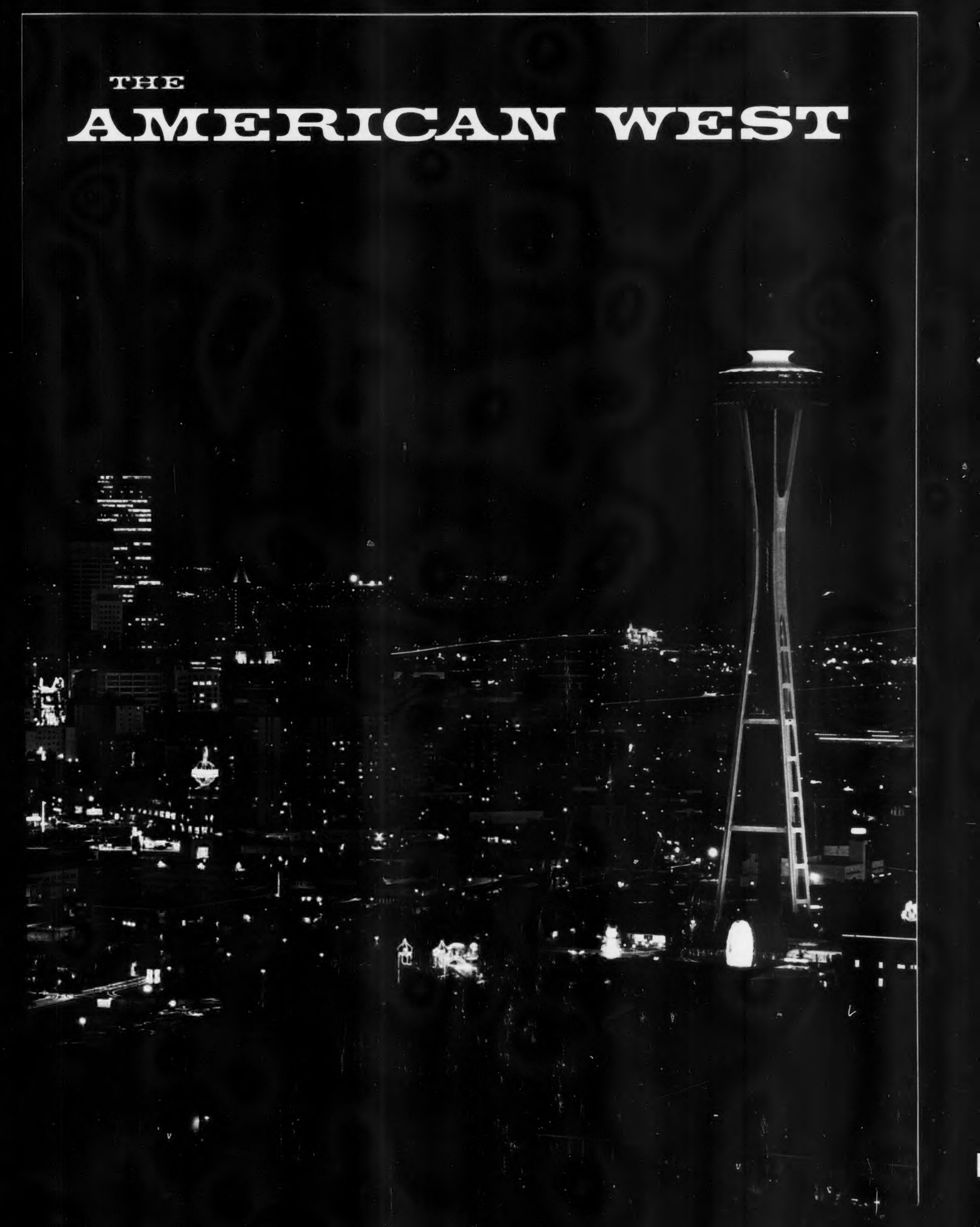
THE AMERICAN WEST



Technology and nature share the twilight skyline in Seattle, Washington, the Pacific Northwest's largest city. In the foreground the futuristic Space Needle—a feature of the 1962 World's Fair—soars above the present-day Seattle Center complex, while sixty miles to the southeast the sun's afterglow tints the slopes of 14,410-foot Mount Rainier, highest peak of the Cascade Range.

(Photograph by Ed Cooper.)

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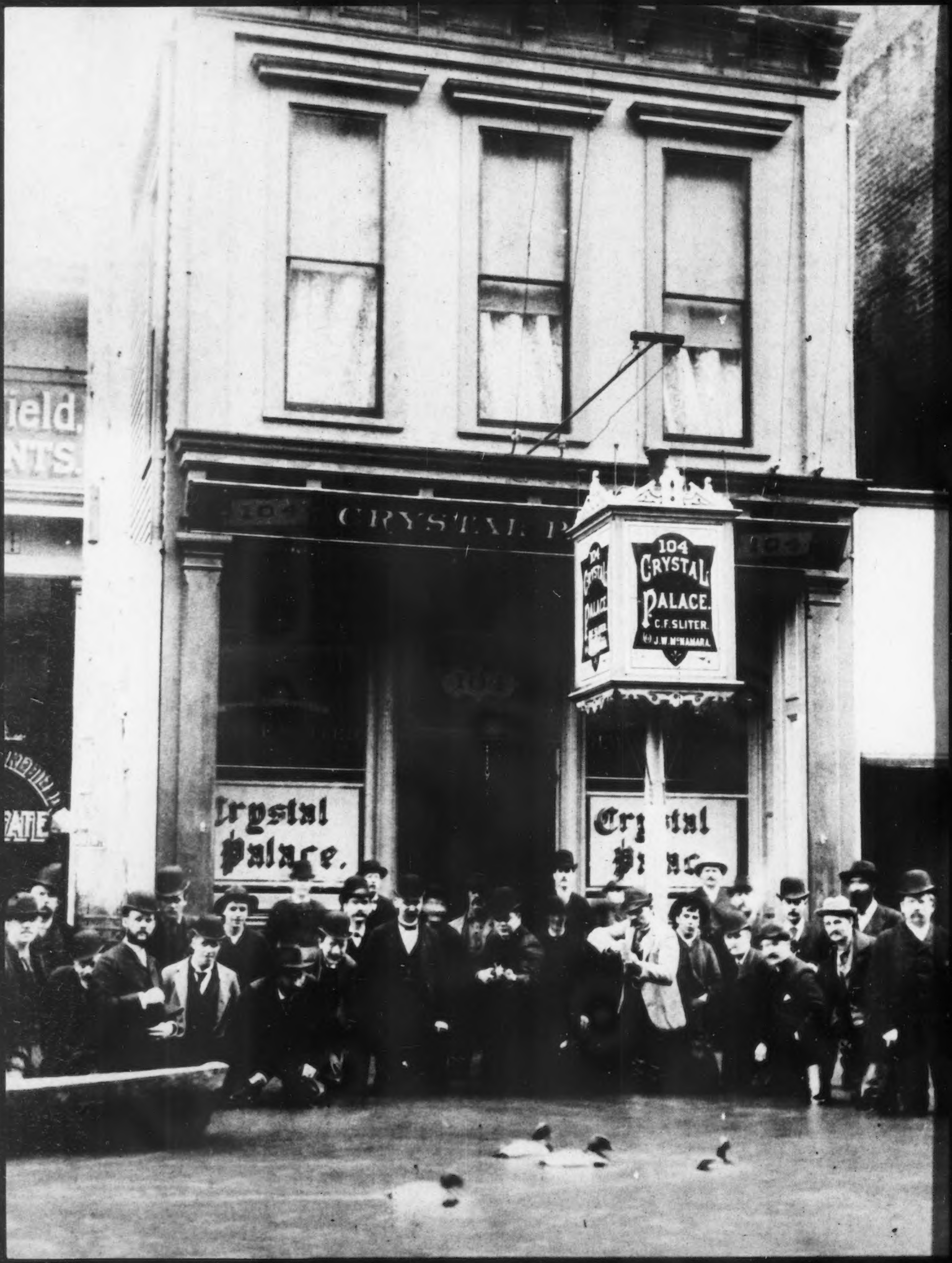
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THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN HISTORY

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September 1973/Volume X, Number 5

Sponsored by the Western History Association

PUBLISHED SIX TIMES PER YEAR—JANUARY/MARCH/MAY/JULY/SEPTEMBER/NOVEMBER

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THE AMERICAN WEST is published in January, March, May, July, September, November, by American West Publishing Company, 599 College Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94306. Single copies: $2.00. Subscriptions: $9.00; two years $16.00; three years $23.00 *(outside U.S. $1.00 per year extra)*. Manuscripts and communications from subscribers should be sent to the above address; members of the Western History Association should address all communications to Everett L. Cooley, P.O. Box 8005, Salt Lake City, Utah 84108.
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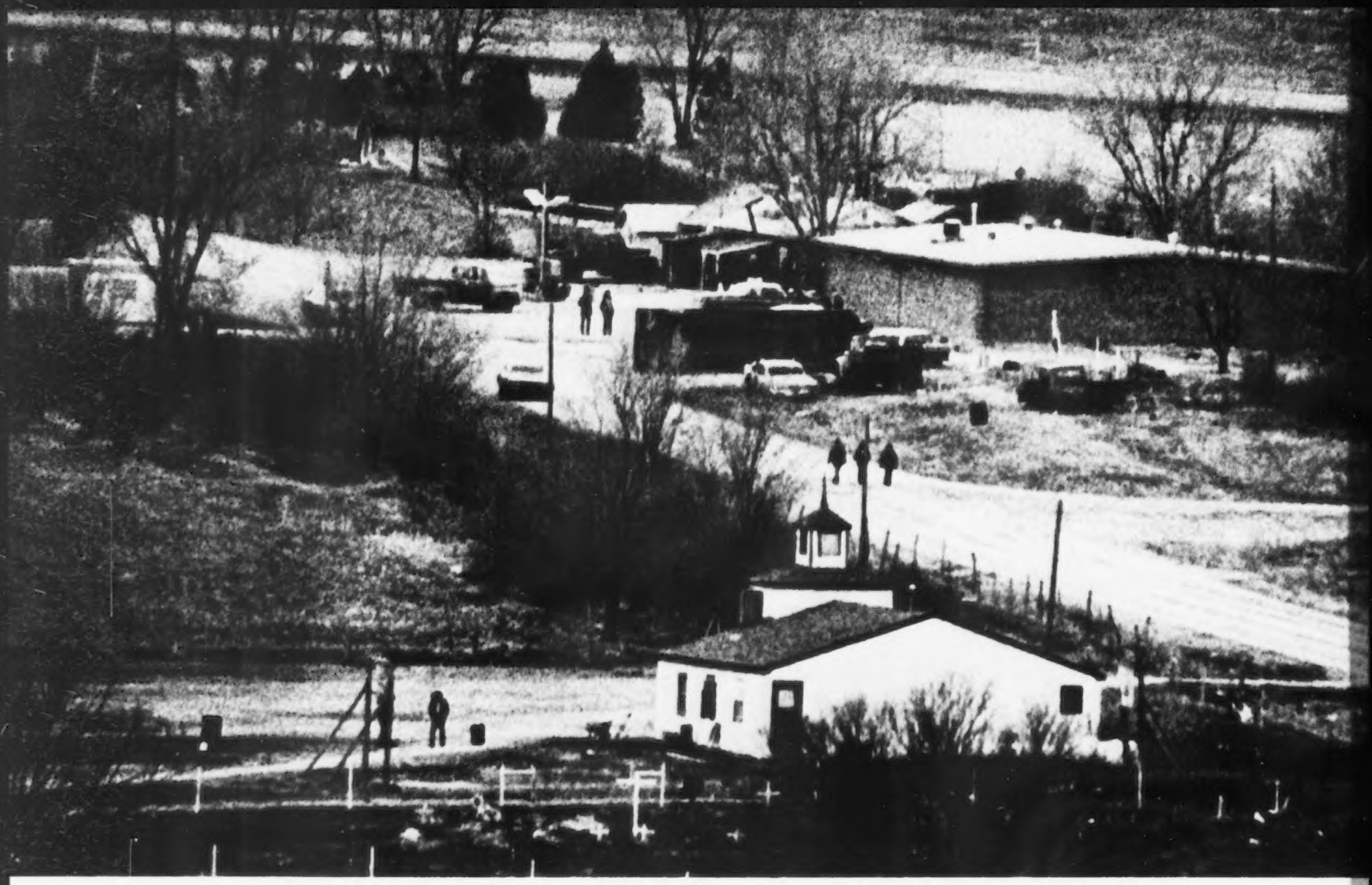
As a gentle counterpoint to the modern Northwest cityscape on the cover, we offer this spirited duck-hunting scene in Portland, Oregon, during that city's flood of 1890.

PHOTO BY L. C. TOWNE; OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



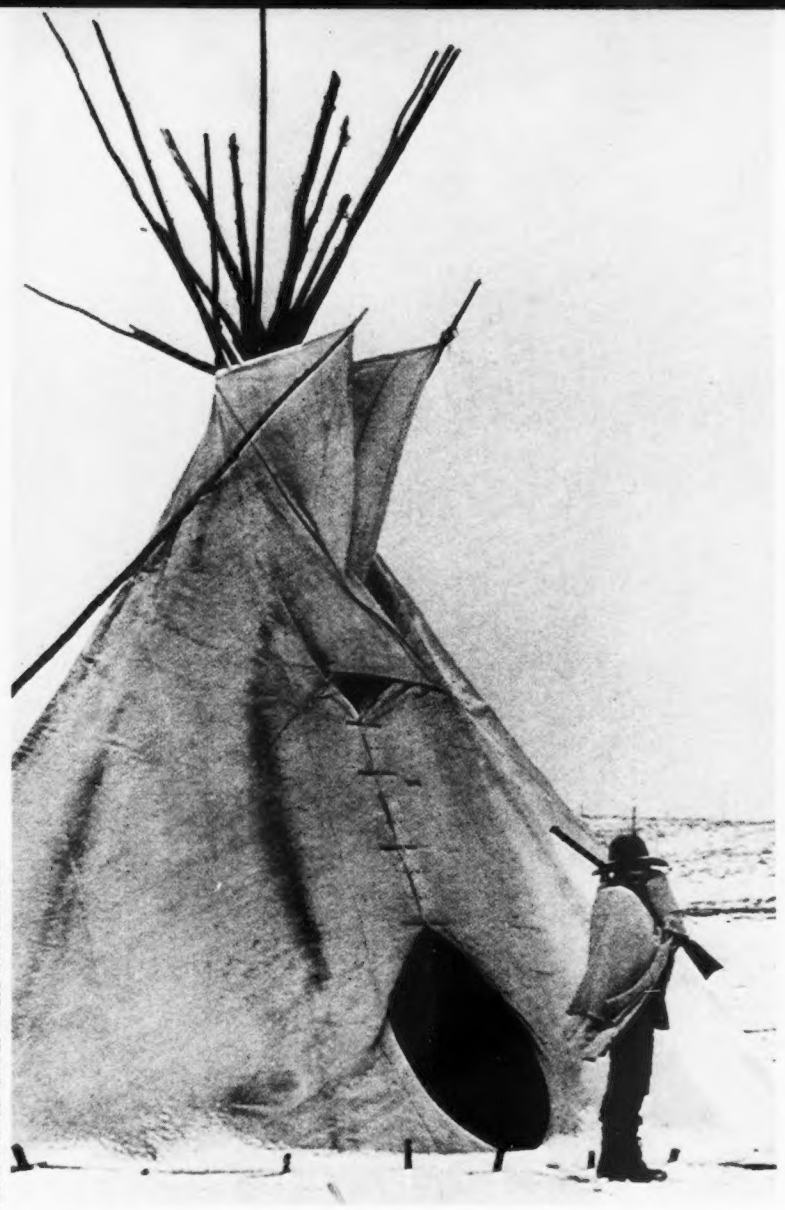
For seventy days during the winter and spring of 1973, members of the American Indian Movement forcibly occupied the village of Wounded Knee, South Dakota (seen here in a telephoto view).

The Second Tragedy at Wounded Knee

A 1970s Confrontation and Its Historical Roots

ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1973, Wounded Knee, a tiny Indian hamlet located on the remote Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, suddenly found itself the site of an incident destined to become legendary in American militant history. In the early dark of that cold evening, about two hundred Indians under the leadership of the American Indian Movement suddenly invaded the seven houses and two churches that comprised the village, looted the community's trading post, destroyed a nearby museum, and took into custody eleven elderly hostages. Then, armed with a substantial number of high-powered firearms, they prepared to defend the small village, its lonely crossroads and surrounding valley. There, on the site of a tragic Sioux-Army conflict eighty-three years earlier, the members of the raiding party prepared to shed Indian blood again, if need be, in defense of their cause.

Response to this provocation came swiftly, and within hours ninety armed federal marshals and other law enforcement officers sealed off the village area and demanded the surrender of the raiders. In response the invading Indians began digging foxholes and other defenses, and soon had themselves well fortified on the hill crowned with the mass grave of the earlier Wounded Knee tragedy. They would not leave, they said, until their demands were met. These included broad hints at payments of large sums of money, insistence that the terms of the treaty signed at Fort Laramie in 1868 be made applicable to the Indian people of 1973, a requirement that the Bureau of Indian Affairs be the subject



BOTH PHOTOS: UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

A militant stands guard over a snowy scene suggestive of the nearby tragic Sioux-Army confrontation of 1890.

by Clyde D. Dollar

of a congressional investigation, and demands that the entire Oglala Sioux elected tribal council and government be summarily ousted because of corruption.

Richard Wilson, Oglala Sioux tribal chairman, regarded the take-over as a criminal act, said as much, and announced plans for an Indian invasion of the Indian-held community. The two senators from South Dakota, George McGovern and James Abourezk, hurried to the scene to negotiate the release of the prisoners. The Department of Justice took charge of the situation and reinforced its gathering of marshals, and a state of siege soon developed. And throughout, the demands from the AIM leadership grew more insistent and, to the federal authorities at least, more irrational.

Sealing off the roads effectively stopped the Oglala Sioux from attacking the AIM positions, and the federal posture solidified into one of preventing, at all costs, the shedding of one drop of Indian blood, regardless of provocation. The hostages were released but stayed in the village "under AIM protection" for several days longer. The attempts at negotiations between the insurgents and the federal authorities had the appearance of a poorly organized three-ring circus, and the days passed with no result other than mounting tensions.

News cameramen, smuggled into the village by the insurgents, kept the American public's interest high, and federal patience wore thin under the irritating abuse from the by now firmly entrenched militant Indians. A showdown appeared imminent with the issuance of a federal ultimatum, but various church groups, under the leadership of the National Council of Churches, almost frantically interposed their bodies between the two threatening sides. The federal marshals relaxed their blockade.

Immediately, food, supplies, more guns and more Indians poured into the tiny village. Nationally prominent militant personalities paraded through the area, and the AIM leadership, flushed with its apparent victory over the "feds," held war dances and proclaimed the Independent Sioux Nation with capital at Wounded Knee. In the face of all this, plus a threatened mass attack by the assembled Oglala Sioux tribe, the federal road blockade again went into effect. A snowstorm helped cool tempers for a few days, but with the thaw came urgent pleas from within the village for food and supplies. The militants, short on everything but bullets and boasting, with pathetic awkwardness butchered a pregnant cow. Hired sympathizers flying dawn missions of mercy air-dropped supplies, and food intended for the noncombatants still in the village found its way into the stomachs of the combatants. The siege continued unabated.

Negotiations resumed, and continued, and recessed, and then continued again. The official observer from the South Dakota governor's office, charged by Justice Department officials with meddling and aiding the militants, left under threat of ouster. Representatives of the National Council of Churches, wearily making their way across the established DMZ separating the two armed forces, came under suspicion of collaborating with the federal forces and were bodily thrown off the premises by the militants. Negotiations still continued, then broke down, and then continued again, but little progress evidenced itself. The demands of the AIM leadership shifted from day to day, and with each new posture, more strident than the last, the federal authorities became visibly more irritated.

Members of the press, treated to a rehearsal and several repeat performances of a little drama in which four captured federal officials, hands held high, were paraded under armed guard, decided they were being "used" by the militants, whereupon they summarily packed up and left the scene. Smarting under this insult, the AIM leadership blasted

Two weeks after taking over Wounded Knee, AIM leaders declared it a sovereign state. Here militants stop a car at one of the roadblocks they established around the village.

the press as unfair and a tool of the government, to which the reporters responded first with scalding editorials and then with a virtual nationwide silence on the subject of Indians. Knowing that what the public does not hear about it soon forgets, the press went about the business of reporting on insurrections everywhere but at Wounded Knee.

Finally, a ray of negotiating light shone forth, and, after many speeches and another round of Indian victory celebrations, Russell Means, one of the AIM leaders, left the village escorted by federal authorities. After first being charged by a federal grand jury with numerous law violations, Means went to Washington to see a representative of the Great White Father. Having briefly regained the eyes and ears of the news media, he suddenly became obstinate, re-interpreted to his own benefit the already much discussed and signed settlement, and refused further cooperation. His actions effectively abrogated the whole matter and abruptly ended the negotiations.

Meanwhile, back at Wounded Knee, insurrection broke out inside the AIM ranks, and gun fights threatened to erupt within the village itself. Another AIM leader, caught sneaking out of the area, was arraigned and released on bail. Suffering from a weakened leadership and frustrated over failure of the federal authorities to capitulate fully, the militants again opened fire on the marshals. In the resulting prolonged fire-fight, several militants were wounded. One of them died a few days later, thereby providing the much desired first martyr from the take-over. To the acute embarrassment of the Wounded Knee cause, this hailed martyr proved to be a white sympathizer masquerading as an Indian. Not even first blood drawn was truly red!

Week after lonely week went by, and the militant Indian occupation and federal siege of famed Wounded Knee continued. The containment forces still blockaded the lonely roads leading to the village. The militant force, considerably reduced through desertions, still exchanged sporadic shots with marshals and stray cows. The Oglala Sioux tribal members, still angry, continued to demand eviction action. The Pine Ridge Reservation came into the grip of real terror as vigilante groups, spawned by conflict of opposing factions within the tribe, intimidated each other. The freed AIM leaders, out on bail, went their way making threats about a military invasion of the whole of western South Dakota and collected money across the country to pay lawyers for their

BOTH PHOTOS: UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Angered by the invasion, Indians billing themselves as "the original inhabitants of Wounded Knee" set up other roadblocks outside of the AIM fortifications to stop militant sympathizers.

court defense. And over the Easter holidays the remaining militants beat, kicked, tortured, and finally crucified either a man or a dummy—only they knew which—as entertainment for themselves and for the remotely positioned marshals. In the wisdom-filled words of one wizened patriarchal member of the Oglala Sioux tribe, the situation was "one hell-of-a-mess!"

Then, one night, either accidentally, drunkenly, or deliberately, the militants fired the sacked trading post. Being filled with food and Molotov cocktails, it burnt gloriously. Soon after, following a news blackout during which the hungry militants did much negotiating, into the early sunlight of a spring-filled morning stepped the remaining Wounded Kneers, now virtually leaderless. They laid down the few arms not previously smuggled out, gave up the bunkers and trenches they had built to die in, and without fanfare departed. They left behind a thoroughly destroyed village. Indian homes had been used for slaughterhouses, whorehouses, and toilets. The stench of the village itself, the twisted girders of the burnt trading post, the charred remains of several homes, and the pornography-smeared churches mutely testified to the asininity and frustration of the affair.

SEVENTY DAYS LONG THE SIEGE LASTED before it passed into history. Sealed off from the rest of the world, a place of defiance quietly turned into a place of confinement; an attempt to focus world attention on Indian mistreatment became, in the long run, Indian mistreatment of Indians and a cul-de-sac for Indian hope. The second Wounded Knee tragedy, at two months and ten days of hate and confusion, became the longest sustained armed confrontation fought on western soil in American history. It ended not with a bang but with a whimper.

If the consequences of the event at Wounded Knee were not so potentially tragic, its comic aspects could be better enjoyed. Here were grown men earnestly playing the uniquely American game of cowboys and Indians—except that in this case the cowboys encircled the Indians who defended the wagon train. Blustering threats and demands so desperately serious to AIM leaders turned into silly rantings of petty demagogues through exposure by the news media. Stealthy figures smuggling through the night, planes dropping mysterious bundles by the dawn's early dark, swaggering youths imitating ghosts of great warriors, "spontaneous" acts of defiant hostility rehearsed before performance—all this has

Tensions at Wounded Knee reached a peak when armed militants paraded four government postal officers, their hands above their heads, before members of the press. Later the men were released.

the ring of a poorly written movie satire. The deadly seriousness of the event, on the other hand, cannot be minimized as a decided influence on Indian future. The lawlessness displayed at Wounded Knee will remain in the minds of policymakers long after its comedy has been forgotten. Domestic peace, well-being, and property were deliberately destroyed by the AIM leaders and their followers, and the society victimized by these acts will most likely have its retribution in one form or another, if not now then in the future. Furthermore, the spectacle of the federal government, stymied in attempts to restore law and order and frustrated in rational bargaining with irrational men, is not likely to create fond memories towards Indians in the minds of legislators and financiers who control Indian present.

The economics of Wounded Knee no doubt will also exert an influence on the future of Indian progress. An enterprising reporter discovered that the AIM organization had been paid more than $209,000 in grants by federal agencies, principally the Office of Economic Opportunity, since June, 1972. To this figure should be added the $31,000 reportedly given to AIM by the Lutheran Church, the $7,500 spent by the National Council of Churches, and at least $100,000 donated by several prominent civil-rights minded motion picture personalities. These sums supported the take-over and sacking of the BIA building in Washington, the Custer City burnings, the troubles in Rapid City and Hot Springs, and then the invasion of Wounded Knee. These sums may also do much toward explaining the considerable arsenal of expensive high-powered firearms that defended the Indian insurgents in their recently vacated historically symbolic stronghold. It would appear that Indian war-making has indeed become lucrative—to certain Indians, at least.

Costs to the federal government, that is, the taxpayers, for keeping the containment forces at Wounded Knee also grew into considerable sums. Congressman James Abdnor of South Dakota reported that, as of the fortieth day of the take-over, more than two million dollars had been spent in keeping the uneasy peace and tenuous truce around the village. By the end of the occupation, that figure had ballooned to almost five million. Add the disruption of income for many of the reservation Indian people and the destruction of property in the village of Wounded Knee, and the total price tag of the affair will reach more than seven million dollars. That sum, more wisely spent, could have made the

BOTH PHOTOS: UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Federal marshals maintained a ring of fortified bunkers around the village during most of the time it was occupied. Gunfire was exchanged on a number of occasions and two militants were killed.

Pine Ridge reservation and the Oglala Sioux people almost economically self-sufficient. As it is, this expenditure produced no more permanent or beneficial results to the Indian people than the wind moving over the grass.

AN EVENT OF THIS MAGNITUDE, especially one with so many adverse implications for Indian future, deserves an examination as to its cause. The Indians' discontent over extreme poverty has frequently been offered as an explanation. Certainly poverty does exist on most Indian reservations, and it can be neither defended nor condoned by the society surrounding those areas. But massive sums of money have been pumped into reservation economies during the past two decades with positive results. While grinding poverty will remain a reservation reality for some time, enough change is already evident to moderate its more drastic effects. These changes are not lost on most reservation people.

Today the High Plains Indians in general live with many more material possessions than at any other time in their history, but there is doubt as to whether this attainment is worth its price in cultural values. Indian religion, for example, can flourish only in the "poverty" of material possessions, and the unusual rise of fakeries (some of which were in evidence at Wounded Knee) bespeak the allure of money for mysteries performed. The proliferation of frauds has created several divisions of thought within the Indian world about poverty.

Still other cleavages exist. Perhaps the major one appears between the generations. The older reservation people generally desire to see progress continue undisturbed along a gentle course, allowing them time to adjust to it and absorb it. But the betterment trends seem only to have accelerated the younger Indians' demands for more and greater, bigger and better, usually at the expense of what the older folks had in mind. If the second Wounded Knee did have the poverty issue as its major cause, the failure of that incident to appeal to the older Indian generations reveals the paucity of the cause itself.

Frustrations with the White Man's bureaucracy is just as often put forth as a major cause for the militant action at Wounded Knee. Almost from the beginning of contacts between Anglo-Americans and the Teton Sioux, each party complained of broken promises on the part of the other.

BOTH PHOTOS: UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Brandishing rifle and tomahawk, two AIM members buzz around Wounded Knee on a commandeered lawnmower.

More often than not, these were caused by misunderstandings stemming from differences in culture instead of by deliberate "devil doings" by either party. It should also be recalled that the creation of Indian reservations and the managing of Indian lives became America's first massive experiment in social programs, and if other such programs today are still not entirely free of bureaucracy, red-tape frustrations, and idiocy, how much less free of these characteristics can we expect the first attempt to have been? Even so, after more than a century of dealings with various governmental agencies, the reservation Indian people accept as a tradition that what a white man says will be done is usually just what will *not* get accomplished. There is considerable justification for this observation even today.

Perhaps the major perpetuation of these bicultural broken promises, that is, the nineteenth-century concept of Indians as wards and the white men as their wardens, dies hard, but dying it is. Since the mid-1930s, the trend toward self-determination has slowly, sometimes haltingly, taken shape. Today Indian influence and control over Indian destiny, both in and out of federal bureaucracy, has never been greater. Not even during the heyday of the wild, free life experienced by the High Plains tribes historically did they enjoy such a measure of control over their own future. With adequate Indian political leadership, this trend shows every sign of continuing and becoming stronger.

That the segment of the Indian world having the closest touch with federal bureaucracy, that is, tribal governments, did not sympathize—indeed, categorically rejected—the AIM take-over at Wounded Knee suggests that frustration in U.S. government relations was an issue of importance only to the militants. And a track record of obtaining $209,000 in federal monies during a ten month period also suggests that even AIM has little cause for real complaint in the White Man's dealings.

Anger over the breaking of treaties and insistence on reinstatement of "treaty rights" under the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie were strong demands made by the holders of Wounded Knee. The ridiculousness of this position should become evident to even the most obtuse observer on reading the treaty in question.

For example, while the 1868 treaty did create the Great Sioux Reservation, a vast tract of land somewhat more than half the size of the present state of South Dakota, it also restricted the Sioux to that boundary, with very little opportunity for leaving the area, and virtually forced them "to commence cultivating the soil for a living." The treaty also created a tentative mechanism for airing grievances between parties—that is, the Sioux and the United States government—but it did not recognize tribal chiefs, leaders, or tribal governments, nor did it automatically grant citizenship to the Indian people. And while the treaty provided for annuities, tools, equipment, and schooling for the Sioux—for a period of thirty years—it did so in a manner blatantly and even harshly paternalistic. Most ironic of all, the militants of the second Wounded Knee would be in direct violation of the 1868 Treaty—if that treaty were still in force—and therefore subject to being delivered up "to the United States to be tried and punished according to its laws" by the rest of the Sioux tribe itself! Apparently, this long-dead treaty became a crusading symbol before the document was carefully read by those demanding its reinstatement.

While no doubt these factors, and others less obvious but equally influential, interacted in some degree to create this second tragedy at Wounded Knee, none of them would have brought about a situation so complicated, inconclusive, and seemingly irrational. Acts of crusading intensity frequently clothe underlying basic causes with rationalized justifications more visible to the moment, and perhaps there is just such an underlying basic cause for the present crisis—one buried so deeply in High Plains Indian culture it is not readily apparent to observers, and even less discernible to those involved in that culture. In pursuing this elusive hypothesis, a brief glance backward into very early Teton Sioux history, while perhaps disconcerting, may nevertheless prove considerably illuminating.

FROM THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, the Teton Sioux people have been observed operating within the framework of their own cultural matrix. More often than not, these observations, even though correct, proved to be distinctly uncomplimentary to those being observed. For example, in September, 1794, Jean Baptiste Trudeau, a St. Louis fur trader, met the Teton Sioux along the Missouri River near the present site of Crow Creek Agency in South Dakota. Catching the trader's boat in shallow water, the Tetons forced it to beach by their camp and then proceeded to sack it. On being informed that he, Trudeau, represented "the great chief of the Spaniards," they haughtily replied "that the Tetons did not have one great chief greater than all the others . . . [but] that each man was chief of his own cabin . . ."

Several months later, in a report to his superiors, Trudeau characterized the Teton Sioux this way:

"[They were a] people which had a peculiar ferocity, who have no ties, who wander ceaselessly in a group, not being able to gather together in a village without stealing, fighting, killing, it may be for women, perhaps for the possession of horses of which one may have more than another. People filled with evil prejudices, attributing ordinary misfortunes, sickness, deaths, to the merchandise or the food which they may have received from us; men greedy for goods which they see without ever wishing to pay the value of it; violent tempers always ready to strike at the least contradiction which they may receive, who violate without scruples the words of assurance of peace and alliances which they give to or receive from their neighbors."

During the three years following Trudeau's altercation with the Tetons, James McKay, a Scotsman in the employ of the Spanish government of Louisiana, explored the Missouri River and met its Indians. In his efforts to persuade the "Sious of the Grand Detour" (no doubt the Brule band of the Tetons) to be a bit more friendly with his own men, McKay finally prevailed on four of their principal chiefs to attend a meeting. About 1797, he recalled this occasion:

"I had a long Conference with [these chiefs] and gave them such Presents as I thought would be most acceptable to them, but as all negotiations of this kind that is entered upon with Indians are generally not only tiresome in their detail but even rarely can they be brought to a positive conclusion, without losing much time; I shall only say that this Conference served to open a communication more for the future . . ."

A few years later, in 1803, Pierre Antoine Tabeau, another Frenchman dealing in the Missouri River fur trade, went to live among the Indian tribes located at the mouth of the Grand River in South Dakota. His sojourn, lasting some twenty-three months, gave him ample opportunity to observe the Teton Sioux. Of their character and political structure, Tabeau wrote:

". . . the spirit of unsociability and of discord which exists among the particular [Sioux] tribes; the ambition and jealousy of the too numerous chiefs, and most of all the national character, naturally brutal and fierce, cause particular enmities to arise, which not only destroy the general harmony but especially that of the various units. Individual quarrels arise which perpetuate, in families, hatred and revenge. Thus . . . a Titon is always armed even in his lodge.

"Insubordination and the misuse of authority are a necessary result of this multiplicity of chiefs, who dispute with envy the shadow of power . . . Among the Titons, the chiefs have authority only when it is a question of pillage; but, if it is a question of calming a riot, of stopping pillage, of aiding a trader in his expeditions, all authority is as nought before the opposition of a single individual . . ."

Tabeau further described in his narrative several Teton acts that have a striking resemblance to parts of the Wounded Knee situation. Among these were arrogant confiscation of a trader's property, threats, attempted murder, and the use by opposing factions within the tribe of artfully constructed dilemmas and capricious actions in their dealings both with each other and with persons outside the tribe.

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, who met Tabeau while on the upper Missouri, also encountered the Tetons and had occasion to observe them at close range. During the meeting held with this tribe on September 25, 1804, the chiefs and warriors became so insolent and threatening that Clark drew his sword and Lewis prepared the men of the Corps of Discovery for immediate battle. This show of force, plus the good sense of the explorers in removing themselves

Continued on page 58

Lawyers for AIM and the government parley. The militants' occupation of Wounded Knee ended quietly on May 8, 1973.

Seen here from the northeast, Black Mesa juts about 1,000 feet above the surrounding Arizona desert. PAUL V. LONG, JR.

Exploring the Past on Black Mesa

The site of a controversial strip mine is providing clues to the history and prehistory of Indians in northern Arizona

by Robert C. Euler

BLACK MESA, THAT LARGE AND RELATIVELY ISOLATED land mass on the Navajo and Hopi Indian reservations of northern Arizona, has been much in the public eye of late. Neither the scenery nor the Indians have been the focus of this special interest; rather, the extensive television and newspaper coverage has been concerned with large-scale strip coal mining operations that have been under way on the mesa for the last three years. Most of the publicity, as one might imagine in this new age of environmental awareness, has been of a negative sort.

It is true that sizeable pits are being gouged from the earth to remove dirt and sandstone formations overlying the area's coal deposits, but it is an exaggeration to say that Black Mesa is being "raped." In the first place, the strip mine covers but an infinitesimal portion of the mesa. The entire highland region has a diameter of some 75 miles and a circumference of 275 miles; the area being disturbed by the mining operations involves only a few thousand acres. Moreover, the coal company has plans to rehabilitate the land after removing the coal by filling in the pits and reseeding the area with native grasses. Many years of overgrazing have denuded the topsoil of vegetation and have caused widespread erosion, and as one biologist has pointed out, "The land will probably be better for Navajo sheep grazing after the reseeding than it is now."

The Peabody Coal Company is doing more, however, than mining coal. It is also sponsoring important scientific investigations of the prehistory and early history of Black Mesa. Under the terms of the Federal Antiquities Act, Peabody has supported teams of archaeologists to undertake long-range reconnaissance and excavation of ruins that are endangered by the huge draglines biting into the earth. Since 1967, under the general direction of the author and his professional colleague, Dr. George Gumerman, hundreds of prehistoric Pueblo ruins and a smaller number of historic Navajo sites have been recorded. Dozens of these have already been excavated by

students under the archaeologists' direction.

The mining company has agreed to both the letter and spirit of the Antiquities Act and has also permitted use of the excavations as a field school—a training ground for undergraduate students from institutions around the country. This is an important educational aspect of the general scientific import of the project.

Prehistoric archaeology, once thought of simply as the reconstruction of the cultural history of past societies which left no written records, is today a complicated regimen, combining techniques from the natural and social sciences in a concerted attempt not merely to reconstruct history, but to understand something about cultural processes—why prehistoric peoples led the types of lives they did. The archaeologists working on Black Mesa during the past seven years have brought in numerous consultants from related fields. Geophysicists from the University of Oklahoma, skilled in relatively new paleo-magnetic dating techniques, have sampled burned clay from fire hearths of the ruins to date the occupations more accurately. Dendrochronologists—tree-ring dating experts—from the University of Arizona have been on the mesa almost every summer, investigating the modern tree-ring record for climatic changes it might reveal. Later, back in the laboratory, they have established the dates of charred timbers recovered from the ruins by the archaeologists. Zoo-archaeologists from Prescott College and the University of Arizona are studying bird and animal bones that have been recovered in the excavations, and an ethno-botanist from the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis has been carrying out similar studies with wild and domesticated plant remains. These remains should help us understand how the prehistoric inhabitants of Black Mesa used plants and animals for food and other purposes, and they will also tell us something about past climatic conditions. A palynologist—a student of plant pollen—from Northern Arizona University is laboriously examining microscopic pollen collected in carefully selected soil samples; this could be one of the most important clues to the climatic conditions over the past several centuries. Hydrologists and geologists from the United States Geological Survey have also been in the field contributing their knowledge to an understanding of arroyo cutting and sediment deposition along the numerous small drainages near which many of the ruins are located. A parasitologist from Southern Methodist University has discovered debilitating parasites in human fecal remains, somehow desiccated and thus preserved. This of course gives insights into diseases of the prehistoric Indians. Physical anthropologists from Prescott College and the University of Arizona have undertaken detailed studies of physical types as well as pathologies from the human skeletons recovered.

It is a time-consuming and complicated business, all aimed at a very functional reconstruction of the lives of the past inhabitants of Black Mesa as they adjusted their patterns of living to the changing natural environmental conditions.

BLACK MESA, so named because its heavy covering of pinyon pine and juniper trees gives it a dark appearance from a distance, is a major land form of the Colorado Plateau in northeastern Arizona. The term "mesa" is somewhat misleading. Rather than being flat topped, the area viewed from its summit presents the appearance of a series of basins and low hills. The elevation decreases from 8100 feet at the northeastern edge of the mesa, near Kayenta, to about 6300 feet in the southwest, the location of the historic and modern Hopi Indian pueblos. All of the mesa is today within the boundaries of both the Navajo and Hopi reservations.

Buff-colored Mesa Verde sandstone caps the area, and, within this formation, shale and coal occur in seams of varying thickness. The entire region is dissected by southwesterly trending valleys containing deep frills of sandy alluvium. Since the 1880s there has been heavy erosion on the mesa. Overgrazing has brought about much of this and has also denuded the lower, usually grass-covered sections. While there are no perennial streams in the entire region, many small washes have cut into the valleys. As is so common in the semi-arid Southwest, these drainages carry large amounts of water only after heavy summer rainfall or after the melting of the deep winter snow cover.

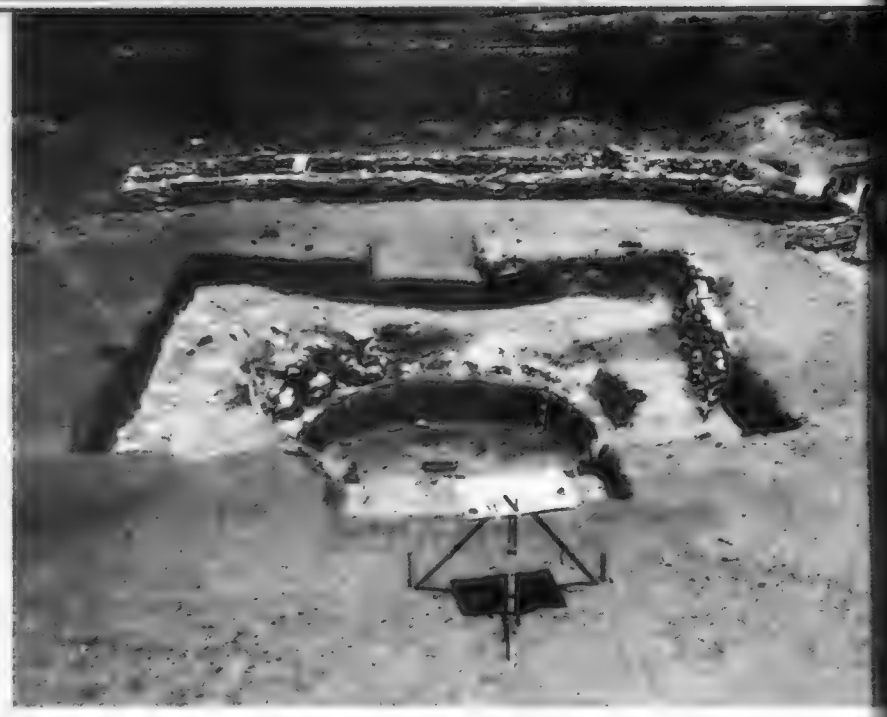
The great bulk of Black Mesa, except in the highlands of the northeast, lies within what botanists often call the Upper Sonoran life zone. Dense stands of pinyon pine and juniper cluster on ridges and slopes. Sage brush is common, especially on alluvial flatlands, while annual grasses such as sand dropseed, Indian rice grass, and blue grama are sparse. In the overgrazed areas, tumbleweed and snakeweed are the most common plants.

Animal life, except for Navajo cattle and sheep herds, is confined to a few deer, rabbits, rodents, and lizards, and numerous rattlesnakes.

Studies of environmental and climatic conditions of past centuries are not yet complete, but it is probable that a much heavier mantle of vegetation and a greater variety of fauna existed in times before the second half of the nineteenth century, when the Navajo occupation began.

Prior to 1967, when archaeologists and consultants began their reconnaissance, very little was known of the pre-history of Black Mesa. A few ruins had been recorded but only one had been excavated, that by the Rainbow Bridge-Monument Valley project in 1936. It was obvious that the region contained many prehistoric Pueblo ruins that had once been occupied by people known to archaeologists as the Anasazi, after a Navajo word referring to "the people who have vanished." Yet no one knew the extent of the occupation or for how long these Pueblo peoples had lived there. Why had they come, what were their social, religious, political, and economic patterns of life, and importantly, why did they ultimately abandon their homes on the mesa?

In the six years that scientific teams have been working on Black Mesa, some but not all of these questions have



At left, students and an instructor examine a **Toreva** *phase ruin before beginning work. Most are lined up near a half-buried row of masonry storage rooms, while one stands in the kiva depression. At right, the same site after excavation. A plane table has been set up in preparation for mapping the area.*

ALL PHOTOS: PAUL V. LONG, JR

The roofs of all Black Mesa kivas so far excavated were burned at the time of their abandonment. At left, students carefully expose charred roof timbers for mapping. Samples are then carefully wrapped with cord and preserved in a saturated solution of white gas and paraffin, as at right, for later tree-ring dating.

been answered. Working almost exclusively within the relatively small area under lease to Peabody Coal Company, the archaeologists have recorded more than one hundred fifty ruins ranging in date from about 500 A.D. into the recent historic period. With one exception, all of those which were occupied prehistorically—that is, before the advent of written records in and about the Southwest in 1540 A.D.—are Anasazi structures. The one exception is an ancient camp site occupied just off the northern flank of Black Mesa in the Klethla Valley. In the summer of 1972 the archaeologists, examining the right-of-way of a coal-carrying conveyor belt, excavated a number of fire hearths containing charcoal and cracked animal bones—the remains of campsites where early hunters had cooked and eaten the animals they had killed. Within the ashes of one of these hearths was a beautifully-fashioned knife blade. It is more than five inches long, of a

mottled chert that is not found anywhere in the region. Charcoal from the hearth in which the knife was found has been dated by the radiocarbon technique at 735 B.C. This implement and the campsite from which it came represent the earliest evidence we have of human occupation on or near Black Mesa. We know no more about these early hunters at the moment. Other camps of the same people, whoever they were, may exist on the mesa. In the summer of 1973, three sites containing only stone artifacts and no pottery were excavated. As yet, the analysis of materials collected is not complete and no dates for the occupation have been obtained.

Furthermore, there is no evidence that Black Mesa and its immediate environs were occupied from that early date until about 500 A.D. Beginning about that time and continuing until at least 1150 A.D., however, the Anasazi made their appearance in ever-increasing numbers. As the centuries passed and as these Pueblo Indians adapted to changing environmental conditions, their cultural patterns changed also. These were not dynamic changes, since the basic Puebloan way of life was relatively conservative. Rather, they were marked by alterations in architectural styles, designs on well-made pottery, shifts in types of foods consumed, and variations of societal groupings. As these changing patterns became more obvious, the archaeologists—who have now excavated more than forty ruins on the mesa—found it convenient to delineate them in terms of named phases. This type of synthesis simply makes it easier to describe the patterns and to understand them holistically and functionally rather than in terms of separate and seemingly unrelated sites. The phases are named after prominent landmarks in the area.

ON BLACK MESA we now recognize six of these phases pertaining to Anasazi life. The earliest period, from about 500 to 700 A.D., is the *Dot Klish* phase. Sites of this time span, so far located only off the western and northwestern escarpment of the mesa, are represented by small pithouse villages. It is thought that very few Anasazi were in the area at the time although, again, much of the occupation may now lie buried under the sand. In any event, the Dot Klish people were relatively sedentary, growing corn and pumpkins but also hunting deer, antelope, rabbits, and other small game, as well as gathering a great variety of wild plants. Very few tools or other artifacts have been recovered from the few sites of this phase that have been located. Nonetheless, it is clear that these people were already in command of a well-developed ceramic technology. Vessels of various shapes were made by coiling clay, then were decorated in simple designs and fired in a reducing atmosphere which produced black-on-gray jars and bowls. These were used for both storage and cooking.

About 700 A.D., settlement patterns changed somewhat. In this second period, the *Tallahogan* phase, more people were moving up onto the mesa, living on the first alluvial terraces above the major drainages. In all probability they were farming the easily-accessible flood plains of those washes. This, of course, indicates that they were engaged in flood-water farming rather than dry farming. Archaeologists do not know too much about the styles of houses in vogue at this time; most of the sites are marked simply by upright sandstone slab cists which were probably used for storage. It is possible that wattle-work structures were constructed for shelter. These were surface houses built of poles and mud. While some of the earlier ceramic designs were still used, a more sophisticated fine-lined motif was also introduced. A few corn grinding implements are the only other artifacts that have been found.

In the next phase, the *Dinnebito,* from about 875 to 1050 A.D., there was a definite shift in the settlement patterns of the Black Mesa inhabitants. Most of the sites of this period so far recorded are located in the upland, pinyon-juniper regions closer to the northern escarpment of the mesa. The general architectural pattern of the sites is quite varied. Large and small pithouses and crude surface masonry and wattle structures were used for both domiciles and storage. Chipped stone tools are more common at these upland sites than they are in those located on the lower terraces; this is probably because these sites are closer to supplies of raw materials in the Klethla Valley to the north. The sandstone cap rock of Black Mesa provided no material suitable for the chipping of tools such as knife blades and projectile points. As with the earlier sites, small, one-hand manos—implements used in grinding corn and other food products—were common. The earlier, relatively crudely-decorated pottery is replaced almost completely by well-made vessels, often with very fine-line black-on-white designs. Some indication of trade with the Pueblo peoples of the Mesa Verde region to the northeast, with the Mogollon peoples of east-central Arizona, and with the enigmatic Cohonina people far to the west, south of Grand Canyon, is indicated from the recovery of a few fragmentary pieces of pottery made by those groups.

Slightly overlapping the Dinnebito phase is another pattern, the *Wepo* phase, which has tentatively been dated between 1000 and 1050 A.D. At this time one begins to see a clustering pattern of settlements that presaged a development more common in later times. Surface masonry structures and subterranean kivas—religious chambers that developed from pithouses—are present in both the lowland and upland sections of the mesa. Most sites of this phase, however, show a preference for small pithouses and surface wattle-work houses. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Wepo phase is a pottery design style intermediate between the earlier fine-line design and later broad-line motifs.

It is clear from the excavations that toward the end of the Wepo phase some major ecological shifts took place on northern Black Mesa. Most of the earlier sites are buried in alluvial fill, an indication that sediment was building up on valley floors. The number of chipped stone artifacts decreases markedly in later sites, while the ratio of animal bones recovered from refuse middens greatly favors small mammals such as

PAUL V. LONG, JR.

A partially excavated Toreva *phase site includes a deep circular pithouse for habitation, right, and a two-room masonry storage structure, left, that subsequently had been converted into a mealing room for grinding corn. In the background, student archaeologists are uncovering an underground mealing room.*

rabbits rather than the deer and antelope more common in earlier phases. Whether this was the result of population increases, changes in precipitation pattern, or a combination of these and other factors is not yet clearly understood. While surface indications suggest that the prehistoric population of Black Mesa increased after the Wepo phase, it seems clear that, because of the aggrading of valley floors, many earlier sites are buried and hence remain undiscovered. Geologists and palynologists spent weeks in the field in the summer of 1973 collecting data that promise to reveal a clearer picture of all aspects of the paleo-environment that affected the lives of the early Black Mesans.

Be that as it may, many more ruins have so far been recovered from the next period, the *Lamoki* phase, which lasted for only about half a century, from 1050 to 1100 A.D. Twenty-one of these sites, including a fifty-three-room cliff dwelling, are now known within the small compass of the survey area. This cliff dwelling looks superficially much like the somewhat larger and better known ruins of Betatakin and Kiet Siel in the Tsegi Canyon drainage a few miles to the north. Yet according to determinations made from tree-ring dates and ceramic design styles, it was occupied almost two centuries earlier than those in Navajo National Monument.

THE GREATEST CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT on Black Mesa was achieved in the next period, the *Toreva* phase. This, too, lasted but about a half century, from 1100 to 1150 A.D. Probably the greatest population increase took place during this time, since more than a hundred of the ruins so far recorded are assignable to this phase. Most of them are in the uplands, away from the major drainages, and on the fringes

of the pinyon-juniper woodland. They are clearly associated with arable areas that were dry-farmed. Consistently they are small and are usually clustered in groups of three to seven. In size and complexity, they vary from isolated sherd areas—sites marked only by concentrations of broken pottery—to clearly defined masonry, kiva, and wattle-work complexes. They can best be understood in terms of a primary and secondary unit classification. The former invariably consists of a three- or four-room masonry storage unit, an aligned kiva in front, several wattle or *jacal* rooms flanking the kiva, a well-defined trash mound, and a small subterranean mealing room to the east. These were probably occupied by an extended family. Interestingly, most of the kivas found so far were burned at the time of their abandonment, perhaps for deliberate reasons.

This settlement pattern is not common in other areas of prehistoric Pueblo occupation. Usually, masonry rooms were lived in rather than functioning as store rooms. Elsewhere, by the twelfth century, the Pueblos had virtually given up the construction of *jacal* units and only infrequently does one find the small, underground mealing rooms with three or four slab bins that once held metates, or corn grinding stones. On Black Mesa, however, this model is commonplace.

Secondary sites, both those that were lived in as well as those functioning for more limited activities, invariably lack a kiva and it is thought that the inhabitants gathered at nearby primary sites for socio-religious observances. A clustering of secondary sites near the primary ones is most noticeable.

The pottery found in Toreva phase ruins is much more varied than that from earlier sites. Black-on-white vessels come in a variety of decorated styles; corrugated cooking ware is quite common; black-on-red pieces and an occasional polychrome vessel are present. For the first time there is one small clue that the Puebloans on Black Mesa had limited contact with the Hohokam of the far southern Arizona deserts: Hohokam pottery was recovered in a Toreva phase site during the 1971 excavations.

Bone tools, such as awls, so common in earlier periods, are rare, and chipped stone artifacts are almost non-existent. Troughed metates and two-hand manos, the principal corn grinding tools, are relatively common although usually fragmentary. One enigma involves the underground mealing rooms. Invariably, the slab bins that once held the metates are empty. When the Toreva phase people abandoned their homes they apparently carried the heavy metates with them while leaving the smaller, more portable, and usually worn out manos behind.

Until recently it was thought that northeastern Black Mesa was completely abandoned by the Pueblos around 1150 A.D. at the conclusion of the Toreva phase. Two or three ruins that were occupied later, however, have since been found on the mesa. One of these is a large U-shaped pueblo that seems to have been inhabited about 1200 A.D. Two others, to the south, were in use as late as 1300. Nonetheless, most of the Pueblo Indians left Black Mesa around the middle of the twelfth century. Specialists in archaeology and paleo-climatology are still trying to understand the reasons for this general exodus. Probably it was due to definite changes from winter to summer precipitation patterns that affected crop growth and maturation. Some of the people undoubtedly moved north into the well-watered Tsegi Canyon drainage. Others, however, moved south until the end of the thirteenth century when they and their relatives from the Tsegi continued on to the southern extremities of Black Mesa to found the present-day Hopi Indian towns.

FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS the bulk of Black Mesa lay uninhabited by human beings. In the north, ancestors of the Southern Paiute moved into the Kletha Valley–Navajo Mountain area in small numbers some time after 1300 A.D. Less dependent upon agriculture than were the Pueblos, these Great Basin Indians managed to live in the rugged canyon country until about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Navajos, moving from the east, were probably in the southern sections of Black Mesa, east of the Hopi villages, by that latter date. In the fall of 1859, a column of United States soldiers—infantry and mounted riflemen—made an exploratory foray over Black Mesa. The commander of this column, Capt. J. G. Walker, a veteran of the Mexican War, wrote in his official report:

"No part of this region is now inhabited, except the extreme eastern border, although it was evidently inhabited some years ago, as we saw many abandoned Navajo huts. Our guide (a Navajo) says the reason is the Navajos are afraid of the Pah-Utahs upon whose country it borders."

Reconnaissance of the mesa by various archaeological teams have resulted in the discovery of a number of abandoned Navajo hogans, sweat houses, corrals, and other structures. None, however, date from earlier than the 1880s, and most can be associated with Navajo families that presently live in the immediate vicinity.

The story of the history and prehistory of Black Mesa is by no means complete. The archaeological reconnaissance and excavation of the area is an on-going project. With the continued support of the Peabody Coal Company and the Navajo and Hopi tribes, more detailed reconstruction will be forthcoming. The general picture already discernible is due in no small measure to the dedication of the numerous scientific teams that have already participated in this project, which is aimed at understanding not just the history of Black Mesa, but the processes by which man adapted to his ever-changing environment in the past.

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CANNERY ROW

The dilapidated Monterey factories that John Steinbeck immortalized are silent now, but their romance lingers on

Text and Photographs by Steve Crouch

"The canneries themselves fought the war by getting the limit taken off fish and catching them all. It was done for patriotic reasons, but that didn't bring the fish back. As with the oysters in Alice, *'They'd eaten every one.' It was the same noble impulse that stripped the forests of the West and right now is pumping water out of California's earth faster than it can rain back in. When the desert comes, people will be sad; just as Cannery Row was sad when all the pilchards were caught and canned and eaten. The pearl-gray canneries of corrugated iron were silent and a pacing watchman was their only life. The street that once roared with trucks was quiet and empty."*

— John Steinbeck's *Sweet Thursday*

To process the Monterey Peninsula's beneficence from the sea, Cannery Row came into being, a mile-long line of wooden factories, all anchored solidly to the street at their fronts while the rest of them sat on great wood and steel pilings above the surf. During heavy seas the buildings shuddered and creaked under the assault of the waves like wooden ships caught in a storm.

On days when boats brought fish to the canneries, their penetrating smell settled over the whole area, wafting up and down the Row as the excess catch was reduced to fish oil, meal, and fertilizer in the reduction plants. When the breeze was right, which was almost always, the stink drifted slowly toward Monterey; it curled around the point below the Presidio and on past the Coast Guard station, sending delicate tendrils of piquant scent up the full length of Alvarado Street and leaving a trail of wrinkled, upturned noses. On rare occasions the subtle aroma of overripe sardine would find its way over the hill and through the pines to the aristocratic nostrils of Carmel.

From up and down the coast and from the valleys beyond the mountains, the people came to work in the canneries. The Portuguese came, the Italians, the Japanese and Chinese and Mexicans, and they invested the street with a polyglottal clamor. The Row embraced them all.

The people who worked in the canneries separated themselves into their own subcommunities in an area west of the Presidio that came to be known as New Monterey. They lived in small enclaves on the long hillside that starts at the Southern Pacific tracks beside the canneries and rises steeply to the distant pine forest on the upper slopes of the ridge. The paisanos, that happy

Opposite and overleaf: High above the beach, the abandoned canneries stand quiet, deserted, and forlorn — the only visible legacy of an era that vanished with the sardine.

amalgam of Mexican, Indian, Spanish, and Anglo-Saxon blood, sons and grandsons of the first settlers, lived on the other side of the Presidio, on the hillsides above Monterey. All of them lived within the sound of the cannery whistles.

During the time of the year when sardines were plentiful, the fleet would sail into Monterey in the foggy dawn. The boats that had not been fortunate were silent and their crews morose as they sailed past the canneries and on to anchor in the harbor. The other boats, with tons of fish aboard, approached the canneries with boasting whistles. The various canneries replied, raising their voices in a hoarse chorus of welcome. Each whistle was pitched differently from all the others so that when the sounds went forth toward Pacific Grove or east around the shoulder of the hill toward Monterey or straight up the slope to New Monterey, the listening people knew immediately which canneries were receiving fish from the boats nuzzling at the hoppers in the sea behind them.

The whistles marked the limits of time for the people more than the rising or setting of the sun; the whole rhythm of the community was attuned to their sound. When they bellowed, the people dropped what they were doing and came quickly down the hill, homing on the sound. They started singly, joining others on the paths through the trees and between the houses, each group flowing into larger platoons of rubber-coated, rubber-booted men and women who poured across Lighthouse Avenue, down through vacant lots, and around the shacks along the railroad tracks. They trooped noisily past the quiet, shuttered bulk of Flora Wood's sporting house and its sister establishment down the street, La Ida's, and across Ocean View Avenue into the warm, steaming, odorous caverns of the canneries, where fish unloaded from the seiners already filled the holding vats to overflowing.

When the women were gathered and poised over the long cutting tables, the buildings shuddered and machinery began to turn long steel belts that brought the fish pouring forth in a cascade. The women bent to the endless task; fish were beheaded, trimmed, drawn, and quartered. The silver stream came on relentlessly; there was no time to draw back, to look away, lest the inundation by the torrent be irreversible. As soon as a fish was cleaned, it was stuffed neatly with its brothers into an open can that, full to overflowing, was placed upon the moving belt. It was carried away, filled with tomato sauce or olive oil, cooked in ovens, and then sealed tight by a clattering, whirling machine served by a crew of men with an endless supply of lids.

Steam rose from leaking pipes and ovens, as if fog from the gray ocean had crept inside to insinuate itself into every corner. A pervading clatter came from metal chutes where never-ending columns of cans rolled down from an inexhaustible source in some unseen loft.

Hour after hour the fish came down, knives flicked at fish, cans clattered, steam hissed and eddied over everything, until someone of authority blew a whistle to bring about a frenzied pause: stretching, smoking, chewing, gossiping. Then another whistle began the Chaplinesque dance all over again, until at last the holding tanks were emptied and the last fish moved down the table to be neatly cut up, stuffed in its can, and started on its way to an unknown table.

Up and down the Row, as this time came at each cannery, its whistle blew once more and the people moved past the time clocks into the streets and began their slow exodus up the hill. Back inside, the maintenance crew washed down the tables and floors, flushing unusable residue out through

Crews exulted in being first to port, first to unload their catch on the wharf, while unluckier boats were left far behind, still hauling in their nets.

hatchways that opened upon the sea. The waiting gulls, scavengers of the shoreline, came plunging and screaming toward the scraps as they fell to the water below. The canneries slowly grew quiet, waiting until once again the whistles from a triumphant fleet set the whole town in motion.

The seasons came and went, sardines by the billion were served up by the sea, disappeared into the canneries, and then departed, wrapped in tin and neatly stacked, case on case, in truck and boxcar. Until, in time, the boats came silently back into the harbor more often empty than full. The crews blamed their luck on everything except the obvious: there were no more sardines.

Eventually the purse seiners moved south to Port Hueneme, San Pedro, San Diego, and some went on halfway around the world to fishing grounds off West Africa. They never returned; there was no reason to. The sardines were gone, disappeared as completely as if they had never existed in the bay.

The canneries on the Row fell silent and empty, all save one, which still sporadically canned mackerel, anchovies, and squid. The rest stood there quiet, deserted, forlorn, the wind whistling through their empty windows. Finally, the last cannery closed its door and an era came to an end.

In the decade and a half since the sardines disappeared and the whistles fell silent, the people of the hillside above the Row have turned to other things. Some work for the army at Fort Ord; some fish for the tourist dollar as relentlessly as they used to pursue the sardine. Some have even fashioned a career built on the firm, secure foundation of a regular welfare check. The poorer Sicilians, those who never succeeded in climbing upon the backs of their peers to middle-class affluence, have never changed a life style that goes back a thousand years; each man fathers as many sons as possible, works to support them until they are old enough to support him, and then settles back into the warm security afforded by filial devotion and responsibility.

The Chinese are scattered, their shack town long since burned down, probably as a result of a guttering lamp knocked over by some Chinese deep in another plane of consciousness, his smoldering opium pipe beside him. This story is as good as any, although some old hands hint that more likely some self-appointed civic renovator, looking upon the sleazy row of shacks along the water as a festering Oriental sore on the flank of New Monterey, moved upon it one night bearing kerosene and torches. At any rate, it was as spectacular a fire as any that blazed from time to time among the empty canneries years later.

For more than fifty years the venerable old buildings sat there, each year looking more tattered and disheveled. Through the years the continued wash of the tides, the weathering action of salt air, the corrosive action of spilled liquids from the canneries, and rust all worked to create a soft patina on wood and a rough encrustation on exposed metal. Raw timber turned warm gray, the color of the granitic rocks on which the canneries stand; iron pilings accumulated deep crusts of red, overlaid with barnacles and limpets where the waves washed against them, until their original appearance was altered beyond recall.

From the ocean side, the canneries grew to look like ancient battlements against which the sea had moved its siege troops in a constant war of attrition. Thousands of gulls, drawn by spilled fish, wheeled about, perching on pilings and roof ridges to add their own not inconsiderable patina. Beneath the outer pilings, where waves spent themselves on smooth sand, small sanderlings in search

From the fishing boats the endless silver stream poured into giant hoppers, then on conveyor belts to the cutting tables, canning machines, and shipping cartons, to be hauled away to a million waiting tables.

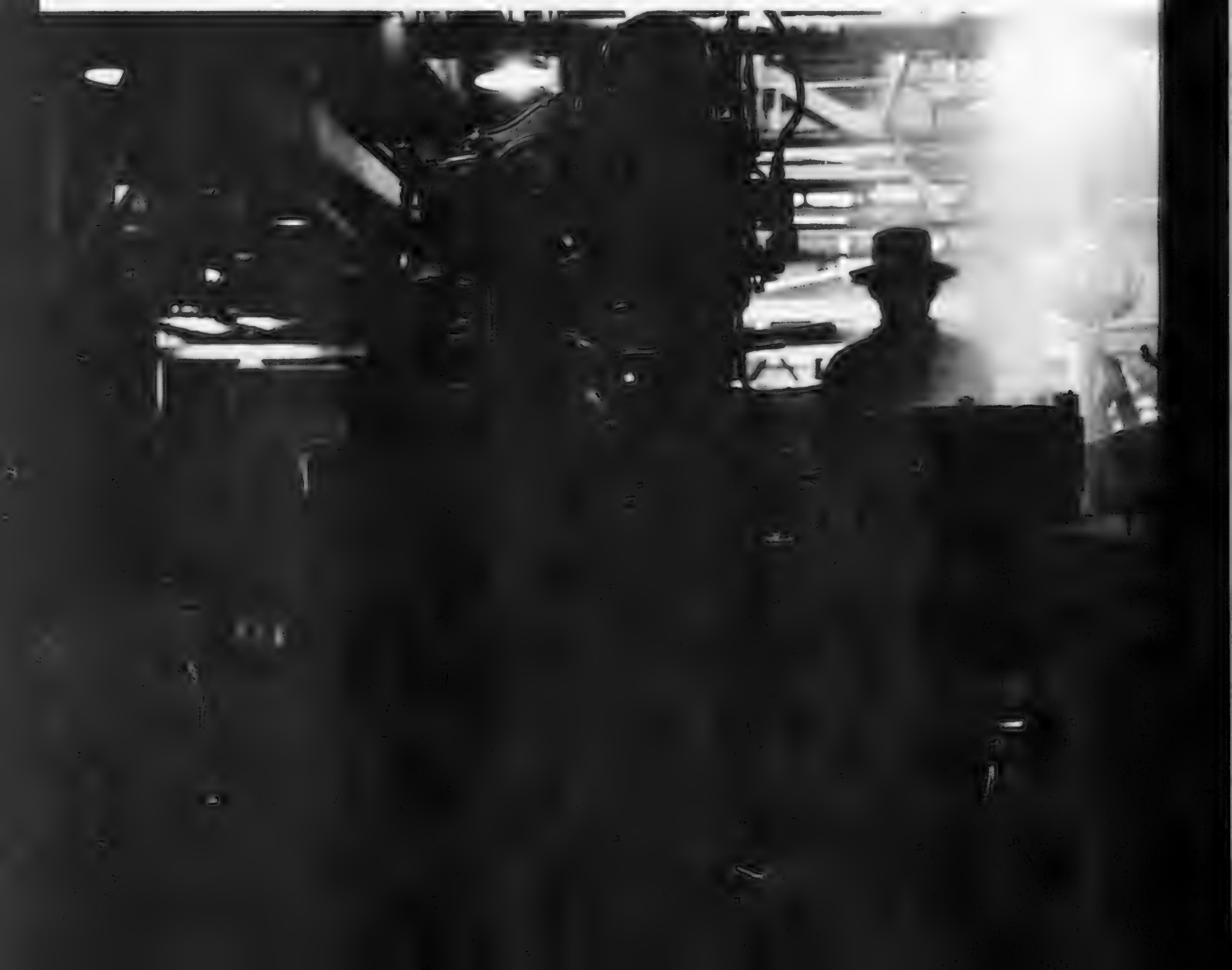
of minute crustaceans advanced and retreated before each wave in swift and perfect unison.

Then, one by one, the canneries began to burn, always in the dark of night, lighting up the whole bay so that people in Santa Cruz and Moss Landing and on the mountains above San Jose were convinced that all Monterey was ablaze. Over a period of fifteen years more than half the canneries went up in smoke. Monterey people speculated openly whether it was arson by some neurotic or arson for insurance.

The Row, that portion not gone up in smoke and flame, has suffered indignities that would have saddened Steinbeck were he to walk there now looking for the Bear Flag or Wing Chong's Emporium or La Ida's or the Pacific Biological Laboratory. Gone, all gone. La Ida's is a restaurant, Wing Chong's an antique junk shop, the Lab a self-conscious private club for mildly roistering and aging professional men, the Bear Flag—that paragon among fancy houses, whose image will surely remain peerless for all time—the Bear Flag now an empty lot beside an auto body works.

Some of the canneries, sagging, their broken windows sightless or boarded against intruders, huddle together at the east end of the street. On the west end, the others are tricked out as expensive restaurants or chic bazaars.

The canning machines—wrapped in steam and fed by an endless supply of lids—thumped out can by can the pulse of Cannery Row.



The street is attuned to a different rhythm now than when the whistles blasted in early mornings of the past. Now Cannery Row—no longer Ocean View Avenue but renamed officially Cannery Row by a city council that recognized when it had a good thing—comes alive when the first of an endless number of California Parlour Car Tour buses rounds the hill from Monterey, passes the Coast Guard station and the jetty, and turns into the deserted east end of the street. The bus makes a jog at the railroad track and turns into the western end. The people in the bus, who may never have heard of Steinbeck but who joyfully recognize a tourist trap when they see one, come alert when the bus pulls up beside the old cannery in the very center of activity on the new Row. The building stands there with its weathered facade converted into a gleaming expanse of plate glass windows, behind which stands a moth-eaten old lion. Both the lion and the cannery have a certain crestfallen look about them, as if embarrassed to be caught in such an undignified condition. The tour groups never notice.

The pulse quickens, and the peak is reached when the sun goes down, the lights come up, and shining cars come streaming in to clog the streets. Their passengers fill the eating places, which look like upper-class English restaurants, Polynesian tiki huts, or hangouts of seedy Chicago hoods.

Steinbeck saddened? No, he would have cursed it fervently with mighty, unprintable oaths, turned his back upon it forever, and climbed the steep hills to share a stolen jug of wine with Danny and Pilon and Jesus Maria Corcoran, the paisanos of his fertile brain, to drink away the ugly memory in that lovely and peaceable place that existed in his mind's eye, Tortilla Flat. And when the fog came through the pines and dawn broke in a gray, dripping world, once more the boats in the bay would whistle and the canneries would answer in a mighty chorus of welcome.

Steve Crouch has been a professional photographer on California's Monterey Peninsula for more than twenty years. His first book, *Steinbeck Country* — from which this article is adapted — will be published by the American West Publishing Company later this month.

Along the Row there is still a welcome for the fraternity of the footloose.

Rapid aerial transportation to California—requiring only that "the passengers are nicely balanced both in mind and body."

COLLECTOR'S CHOICE

by T. H. Watkins

The Fools of '49

IN 1849 THESE UNITED STATES were infected with a madness called the California Gold Rush, next to the Civil War the single most outsized example of national dementia in the annals of nineteenth-century America. Consider this: in 1849, the territory of California was as unfamiliar to most Americans as the valleys of Tasmania and not much less difficult to get to than the plains of Mongolia. Yet in a matter of less than a year an estimated 100,000 men abandoned homes, families, and jobs to endure three months of painful inching across the rocks and hard places of the trans-Mississippi West and northern Mexico, or of wallowing through the jungles of Central America, or of huddling for six to eight months in the reeking holds of overcrowded ex-seagoing ships—all to fill their bags with fist-sized nuggets and return to the States rich men.

It was lunacy on a grand scale, and fair game for satire. On hand to provide it was a small army of snide lithographers, who produced hundreds of broadsides lampooning the gold mania; three of the best of these works are shown on these pages. On hand, too, was one John A. ("Old Put") Stone, who came to California and—unlike many—stayed, to prosper as the most prolific and successful songwriter of the Gold Rush years. His first pocket-sized songbook, *Put's Original California Songster*, was published in 1855 and had a total printing of 25,000 copies, a remarkable figure for the time. Of the scores of songs produced by the prolific Stone before his death in the early 1860s, this writer's own favorite is "The Fools of '49." Like most of the rest of his Gold Rush songs, "The Fools of '49" cuts right to the heart of the matter, laying bare the essential absurdity of one of the largest mass migrations in human history.

T. H. Watkins *is an associate editor of* THE AMERICAN WEST *and author of several books, including* California: An Illustrated History, *recently published by The American West Publishing Company.*

THE FOOLS OF '49

(Tune: Commence, You Darkies All)

When gold was found in '48,
the people said 'twas gas,
And some were fools enough to think
the lumps were only brass;
But soon they all were satisfied,
and started off to mine,
They bought their ships, came around
the Horn, in the fall of '49.

The people were all crazy then,
they didn't know what to do.
They sold their farms for just enough
to pay their passage through;
They bid their friends a long farewell;
said, "Dear wife, don't you cry,
I'll send you home the yellow lumps
a piano for to buy."

The poor, the old and rotten scows,
were advertised to sail
From New Orleans with passengers,
but they must pump and bail;
The ships were crowded more than full,
and some hung on behind,
And others dived off from the wharf,
and swam till they were blind.

With rusty pork and stinking beef,
and rotten, wormy bread,
And captains, too, that never were up
as high as the main-mast head,
The steerage passengers would rave and swear
that they'd paid their passage,
And wanted something more to eat
besides Bologna sausage.

Then they began to cross the plains
with oxen, hollowing "haw";
And steamers they began
to run as far as Panama,
And there for months the people staid
that started after gold,
And some returned disgusted
with the lies that had been told.

The people died on every route,
they sicken'd and died like sheep,
And those at sea, before they were dead,
were launched into the deep;
And those that died while crossing the plains
fared not so well as that,
For a hole was dug and they thrown in,
along the miserable Platte.

The ships at last began to arrive,
and the people began to inquire:
"They say that flour is a dollar a pound,
do you think it will be any higher?"
And then to carry their blankets
and sleep out-doors, it seemed so droll,
Both tired and mad, without a cent,
they damned the lousy hole.

Chorus

Then they thought of what they had been told,
When they started after gold,
That they never in the world would make a pile.

M.r HEXEKIAH JEROLOMANS DEPARTURE FOR CALIFORNIA.

Two versions of the well-equipped forty-niner.

THE OLYMPIC

RAIN FOREST

A place of cool green twilight that supports "the greatest weight of living matter, per acre, in the world"

by Bette Roda Anderson

ON THE OCEAN SIDE of Washington's Olympic Peninsula is a forest that has no equal on this continent: a lush rain forest where the burgeoning of life upon life led naturalist Roger Tory Peterson to proclaim it "the greatest weight of living matter, per acre, in the world." The conifers of its upper story average two hundred feet tall, and some rise to three hundred. Below them is a second story of deciduous trees, and lower still a dense understory of shrubs. Every surface that is not already green seems to be swathed in epiphytes—ferns, lichens and mosses—hanging in drapery from the topmost branches, upholstering tree trunks, and laying a spongy carpet on the forest floor.

Classically, the term *rain forest* has been used to refer to tropical jungle, which differs in several respects from the Olympic forest. The tropical climate is oppressively hot, rather than cool and mild. Jungle trees are all broadleaf with slender trunks and thin bark, and woody vines are everywhere; Olympic trees are primarily conifers with wide girths and rough bark, and there are no woody vines, only the rather soft vine maple.

Yet the similarities between the two types of forest are startling. Both have a pervading air of verdant dampness, for they receive more than one hundred inches of rainfall a year. Both have a profusion of epiphytes that, with the trees, screen out sunlight and create a perpetual green twilight on the forest floor. Above all, there is in both a richness of foliage, a quality of exuberant growth that is the defining characteristic of rain forest.

Of all the trees in the Olympic rain forest, Sitka spruce is the tallest and the most common. Easily identified by bark plates that are loose and flaky, and needles so sharp they can be painful if brushed, the Sitka spruce sends papery-winged seeds cascading and flying far from the fluted boles of the parent. Unlike California's sequoia and giant redwood (which are larger and more massive), spruce has the company of three other mammoth species growing by its side: western hemlock, Douglas-fir, and western redcedar.

Needles of the western hemlock vary in length; the tops of the trees droop slightly, as if to squint at the sunlight that is so rare in the rain forest. Deep in the Quinault Valley, one giant western hemlock stands 125 feet. Normally a tree is considered tall at just 100 feet; the girth of this beauty is over eight feet—nearly twice the normal—and in every respect, it is the archetype of its species.

The third grand member of the league of giant trees, the Douglas-fir, is not dominant in the rain forest, as are spruce and hemlock. It is a tree of transition; most Douglas-firs show plainly that their beginning came on soil which was stripped of earlier growth by a river in flood or the sudden slump of a hillside—not uncommon occurrences in western Olympic valleys. But instead of claiming the new-found land for itself and its own seedlings, Douglas-fir becomes a living nurselog to the seed of others. Bark furrows, an inch or two deep, shelter hundreds of young hemlock and spruce seedlings. Many will fail to survive, but even if only a few take root, they will eventually grow to overtop the Douglas-fir and perpetuate a timeless balance in the forest.

Least common of the rain forest conifers is the western redcedar. Because of its cellular chemistry, redcedar must have acid soil conditions for optimum regeneration; seedbed acid seems to adjust the enzyme balance of the seed, making possible the absorption of water necessary for sprouting. Therefore, large groves of redcedar are found in swamplands near the coast where soil acid is high, but few endure in the well drained rain forest valleys. On the steep Quinault hillsides, redcedars attract many a hiker's attention. They grow overlapping, scale-like leaves, rather than needles, and their small brown cones hang in clusters from branch tips; but the oddest of all is the habit of old-growth cedars—clusters of them may weld their stringy bark together, and live as one unified tree with many distinct treetops.

This article is adapted from material in The Great Northwest, *to be published next month by the American West Publishing Company.*

Throughout the Olympic rain forest life clambers over life in green exuberance. Here bigleaf maple, clubmoss, and ferns thrive in the Hoh Valley.

DAVID MUENCH

Below the tallest trees are the bigleaf maples, black cottonwoods, and red alders, then an understory of shrubs and low-growing trees, and at the bottom, close to trails, where they can get in the way, vine maples are perversely entangled. Louis Henderson, a pioneer botanist who found his passage undesirably difficult in 1891, described them well: "Cut them out for mules to pass and you find the axe goes through easy, so you think it is as simple as cutting cheese, but start to pull a hunk out of the way, and you find how elastic vine maple is when it rises up and thwacks you!" But today, if one stays to the trails that wind through the exceptionally beautiful rain forest of the Hoh, Queets, and Quinault valleys, the ten- to twenty-foot vine maple tangles command more interest than vitriol.

Vine maple grows in just that small amount of sunshine relegated to the forest floor. One who is intently watching the trail amid the oxalis, avoiding vanilla leaf, foamflower, bedstraw, trailing rubus, liverworts, mosses, and ferns, and winding between the nurselogs, will marvel that vine maple can be sensed, without being seen, just by the distinctive soft green light near these clumps.

DAVID MUENCH

Fallen trees nurture the seeds of many species. The slowly rotting logs become shaggy with mosses and small sprouts, and form the base for a living colonnade of new trees.

DRAPED ON THE BRANCHES AND BARK of many giant trees are the life forms which prefer clinging to others—ferns, lichens, and mosses of the rain forest. They appear as the shag rug of the forest floor, as green life on tree trunks (where bark grooves channel the rain and bark roughness provides a steady surface to hold), or as bright swags hanging from tree tops (where light is maximum the year around). All live epiphytically.

The word epiphyte means literally "upon a plant," whether the guest lives in the crown of the forest, as 90 percent of them do, or on trunks near the forest floor. The host simply provides a place for the epiphyte; its life is sustained with minerals leached by water trickling down from above, and with nutrients brought by the wind. No parasitic organs are sent into a host's vital tissues, and usually there are no undesirable side effects for either party, though occasionally shade from the epiphyte may disrupt photosynthesis conducted by the host; or an epiphyte may absorb so much rain that the branch it occupies becomes overburdened and breaks.

Selaginella, a relative of clubmoss, is the conspicuous yellow-

RUTH KIRK

Born of perpetual snow fields, the Hoh River flows through a valley that once held alpine ice extending to the Pacific.

green "moss" hanging from Olympic bigleaf maples—a preferred host because the rich chemical nutrients leached from its leaves are highly desirable to most epiphytes.

Emerald-green fronds of the licorice fern are almost as noticeable as selaginella, even though it prefers the high branches. The leathery, desiccation-resistant lichen, on the other hand, are screened from sight by overhead leaves. The licorice fern is sensitive to the drying wind which is common at 250 feet, and it browns and withers even while the forest floor still molders from the last rain.

Many of the plants native to the Olympic rain forest also flourish elsewhere—in the Olympic Mountains, in parts of the Cascades (east of Seattle), and along the foggy, cliff-hung shore from British Columbia to California—but only on the west side of the Olympics do these species reach perfection. In only three valleys, the Hoh, Queets, and Quinault, is the exacting blend of unending saturation, mild temperatures, and gentle topography present to an ideal degree and proportion. Away from these three rivers, or above the critical contour line of one thousand feet, the rain forest is less than prime. Spruce and Douglas-fir predominate with their nearly equal numbers, and silver fir is conspicuously present; colonnades

DAVID MUENCH

In a grand moisture-laden panorama, cloud-scraping peaks of the Bailey Range loom above a fog-shrouded valley of lush evergreens.

of trees are less frequent; vine maples grow tall and treelike, and soil and bark show through the green forest mat.

One reason that prime rain forest is restricted to the bottomlands of the three rivers may be the rivers themselves. Each waterway is a juggernaut of logs, debris, and swirling water, shifting constantly within channels on the broad riverbed, along gradients so gradual that in twenty miles, they fall only six hundred feet. The bottomlands are one mile wide, and their walls rise sharply to long ridges that come from central Olympus itself—clearly, these valleys were once chiseled by ice. Furthermore, each of the three spectacular valleys runs toward the southwest, pointing into the eye of most storms, optimizing precipitation, as fog and rain blow in from the ocean and moist, cool air drains down from the peaks.

Each year, 120 to 140 inches of rain drench the Olympic rain forest—some years rainfall is as high as 180 inches, the equivalent of two billion gallons of water for each square mile of forest—more rain than will fall in a century of thunderstorms over parts of the Southwest.

When a winter storm is dumping inches of rainfall on the Hoh, Queets, and Quinault valleys, the elk often bed down and doze to wait it out. A hiker seeks shelter in his tent, because not even the great spruce boughs can offer enough protection in a winter downpour.

Precipitation increases with distance up the valley; the coast is actually drier than the rain forest. Kalaloch, on the Pacific, averages 90 inches; at the end of the Hoh Valley, the average is up to 142 inches; and sometimes on Mount Olympus, just thirty miles inland, the yearly rainfall is 200 inches.

For every sunny day over the forest, there are two which are cloudy, depressing summer temperatures and moderating winter's freeze. Clouds act as a reflector, bouncing back more than half of the sun's light into the atmosphere. In the pale gloom on the forest floor, the light available for photosynthesis is only 1 percent of that at the top of the forest canopy. Species growing in this deep shade have had to make some interesting adaptations. Their metabolic rate is slowed; leaves are thinner, so that fewer cells need energy for maintenance; and chloroplasts—the central factories of a plant's food production—distribute themselves liberally over all top surfaces of the leafy frond.

Wind is reduced by as much as 80 percent in the rain forest, and even the fury of a wind that hits the coast at a hundred miles an hour will only ruffle the tops of the spruce. The trees themselves, the valley wall, and the distance from the sea usually weaken the wind and prevent catastrophe. But occasionally, a gust will roar into the forest from surrounding regions which have been logged, or where there are ranches. Spruces and hemlocks are especially vulnerable if this happens; their roots spread out naturally at the bole, giving the appearance of strength, but they hold the shape of their nurse-log, even after it decays, and penetrate the earth no more deeply than two or three feet. Their grip on the earth and their link to its history seem unexpectedly frail.

But if one counts the years that virgin Sitka spruce have stood in the rain forest, both the current generation and those which preceded it, one goes back through history to before the American Revolution, to before the sailing of Columbus, even to before the Norman Conquest. There is a sense of time and decay in the rain forest, and a sense of regeneration.

Bette Roda Anderson *is coauthor of the American West books* The Magnificent Rockies *and the soon-to-be released* The Great Northwest. *She is currently working on a book on weather in the West.*

The Hill Photographs

Robert T. Hill's photographs of the Big Bend region of Texas and Mexico—four of which appear with this article—are most likely the first ever taken in this remote and rugged sector of the Southwest. They have never been previously published, although several were copied by artists Thomas Moran and C. M. Relyea for Hill's article, "Running the Canons of the Rio Grande," in the January 1901 Century Magazine. *The original negatives are now part of the Robert T. Hill Collection in the USGS Library, Federal Records Center, Denver.*

Hill carried both photographic film and traditional glass plate negatives on his Big Bend expedition. He noted at one point that the glass plates would not pick up details in the canyon walls where the sun struck them directly. He had hoped that the film would make up for such deficiencies, but none of it has since been located. Perhaps none turned out. If so, Hill would not be the first explorer to lose valuable photographic records. William H. Jackson, best known for his spectacular views of Yellowstone, once lost an entire summer's work because the new film he used was defective.

Robert T. Hill and the BIG BEND

An 1899 Expedition That Helped Establish a Great National Park

by Ronnie C. Tyler

ON THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 27, 1899, Dr. Robert T. Hill and five companions grounded their boats on the sandy bank of the Rio Grande near Langtry, Texas, and wearily stepped ashore. They had just become the first party ever to explore and document all of the major canyons of the Big Bend. A news release wired from Langtry shortly thereafter matter-of-factly stated that Dr. Hill and his United States Geological Survey expedition had overcome numerous hardships to make the 350-mile trip and had gathered important scientific information, including more than 500 photographs of the virgin area. The story did not refer to the lawlessness and grandeur of the Big Bend nor did it recount the initial enthusiasm—followed by trepidation—that Hill and his men had experienced in the badlands. And it created no rush to the newly explored land, for the Big Bend contained no abundance of gold or silver, or even fertile farmlands or meadows. Instead, the region offered countless miles of arroyos carved through a harsh desert, fold upon fold of barren mountains and jagged faults, and stupendous canyons with walls soaring thousands of feet high that, in the opinion of several Topographical Engineers who had reconnoitered the area in 1852, rendered the river unnavigable.

Hill's expedition to the Big Bend was typical of the adventurous surveys made throughout the West during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Americans were curious about their continent, and the soldier-scientist-explorers of the Topographical Engineers and the U.S. Geological Survey were providing government and public with masses of information. Clarence King had trekked from the Missouri River to California along the fortieth parallel in 1867-68; Maj. John Wesley Powell had seen the wonders of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado firsthand in 1869; and Dr. Ferdinand V. Hayden had documented the resources of Colorado and Wyoming in the 1870s. Hayden's work at Yellowstone—along with remarkable pictures by expedition photographer William Henry Jackson—subsequently led to the establishment of that area as the first national park in 1872.

Texans were hoping the vast, unknown area called the "Great Bend" would prove similarly spectacular. In 1883 the editor of the *El Paso Daily Herald,* realizing the advantages that would come to West Texas should another Yellowstone be found there, appealed to other newspaper executives to contribute to the organization of an expedition to explore the Big Bend. He hoped to open its "sublime and majestic scenery" to the nation and promised to publish detailed reports of the mysterious region. "Texas is about to eclipse anything that has heretofore been produced within the limits of North America," he confidently predicted. It was a tribute to the isolation and wildness of the Big Bend that it had not yet been thoroughly explored by the time well-known expeditions had crisscrossed other sparsely-populated and spectacular areas of the West; but the editor apparently aroused little curiosity among his colleagues. The popular exploration of the Big Bend was delayed almost to the turn of the century.

The Hill expedition after its arrival at Langtry, Texas: (left to right) James MacMahon, Robert T. Hill, Prentice B. Hill, Shorty Franklin, Henry J. Ware, and Serafino Torrez.

IN 1899, HILL, a Tennessean employed by the United States Geological Survey in Washington, became interested in the mysterious region that had spawned the legends of "Pecos Bill" and Judge Roy Bean, the "Law West of Pecos." As a Cornell-trained geologist who had come under the influence of Major Powell and who had lived most of his life in Texas—including a period of teaching at the University of Texas and work with the state Geological Survey—he had already made a detailed examination of several areas in the Southwest.

As he studied the history of the Big Bend, Hill realized that it had remained largely unexplored for good reasons. Lodged squarely in the crook where the Rio Grande turns abruptly from a leisurely southeastern course to the northeast (hence the name Big Bend, first applied in 1849 by Lt. William H. C. Whiting of the Topographical Engineers) the country encompasses spectacular canyons, alpine heights, and desert. With its harsh climate complemented only by rugged landscape, the Big Bend makes up a large portion of what the Spaniards called the *despoblado*—uninhabited land. Battered and worn smooth from continual pelting by wind-whipped grains of sand, its features are the result of a perpetual struggle in which the elements are matched against themselves. The earth cracks and turns powdery from dryness, then quickly washes away when flash floods sweep down creek beds. The sparse vegetation marks off and defends its living space from potential encroachers. "Each plant in this land is a porcupine," wrote a nineteenth-century traveler. "It is nature armed to the teeth." Only the bold Rio Grande successfully penetrates the *despoblado,* and at times the fierce desert temperatures and chalky soils seem to threaten even its existence.

To Lt. William Echols, who viewed the country from the back of a camel in 1860, the Big Bend was a "picture of barrenness and desolation." Surveyor O. W. Williams, who spent much of his life in the Trans-Pecos, found the region so impassable a few years later that most of his measurements were made by triangulation rather than by chain. The Indians alone seemed to understand the Big Bend; they even had an explanation for its ruggedness: When the Great Creator had completed the earth and placed the stars in the sky, the fish in the sea, and the birds in the air, he saw that a massive pile of stony rubble remained. This he cleaned up by hurling the pieces into a great heap in the Trans-Pecos to become known as the Big Bend.

Hill was apparently unaware of the earliest unsuccessful Spanish attempts to find a road along the Rio Grande to El Paso (Governor Pedro Rabago y Teran of Coahuila entered the area in 1747), and he probably did not know of the misfortune that struck a group of adventurers attempting to open a similar route between San Antonio and El Paso in 1848: one member of the group became crazed and disappeared forever into the wilds. But Hill was intimately familiar with the expeditions of the Topographical Engineers, who charted several portions of the Big Bend between 1849 and 1851.

The harshest part of the Big Bend was penetrated in 1852

This Hill photograph looking downriver in Santa Elena Canyon—the Grand Canyon of the Rio Grande—shows a portion of the massive rock slide that prevented passage by an earlier survey team and which delayed Hill's party for three days.

by an international boundary survey team under Maj. William H. Emory. Emory believed that the Bend was the roughest stretch between San Diego and Brownsville. He warned Marine T. W. Chandler, who conducted this part of the survey, to be prepared for unusual hardships and delays, and offered the commander of the military escort a promotion if the survey were successfully completed within one hundred days.

After bypassing Santa Elena Canyon because of a huge rock slide which still blocks the channel, Chandler's party attempted to float through Mariscal Canyon, only to wreck its boats in a rapids. The expedition resumed the survey by land and became the first to chart Boquillas Canyon, the longest of the Big Bend's canyons. When he reached the vicinity of Maravillas Canyon, Chandler concluded that the territory had become too rough to continue. "The loss of the

boats, with provisions and clothing, had reduced the men to the shortest rations, and their scanty wardrobes scarcely afforded enough covering for decency," he later reported. "The sharp rocks of the mountains had cut their shoes from their feet, and blood, in many instances, marked their progress through the day's work." The survey had to be completed by a fresh team that arrived the following year.

Others—including artist George Catlin and Texas Ranger Capt. Charles L. Nevill—also had tested their skill in this part of the Rio Grande. But Robert T. Hill's party would be the first scientific team to survey all of the major canyons and rapids of the river, and he planned his trip with consequent enthusiasm. Hill had three sturdy boats assembled at Del Rio and these were then shipped by rail and wagon some 275 miles to the expedition's planned starting point—Presidio, Texas. To protect the thirteen-by-three-foot craft from the sharp jagged rocks in the rapids, they were fitted with "longitudinal cleats" on the bottoms. Expecting to spend more than a month on the river, Hill and his men packed only food, surveying gear, photographic equipment, guns, ammunition, and such personal items as they could squeeze into their bedrolls.

As the expedition prepared to embark for the "Bloody Bend," its members realized the truth of all they had heard. The country was a hideout for cattle rustlers, murderers, and Mexican bandits who reportedly fired salvos into camps without even knowing who the sleeping figures were. It was a desert region in which drinking water was available only at carefully concealed springs known mostly to Indians. Two of Hill's men at this point refused out of "sheer fright" to continue, but he was not upset. Hill thrived on adventure and, anticipating major challenges, forged ahead with his preparations.

The expedition now consisted of six men—Hill and his nephew Prentice Hill; Henry J. Ware, an experienced frontiersman; Shorty Franklin, a boatman; Serafino Torrez, the cook; and James MacMahon, a skilled trapper and hunter who had floated the canyons of the Rio Grande several times. Hill felt especially fortunate in having secured the services of MacMahon. As he later wrote: "This man, whose name has perhaps never before appeared in print, [has] spent his long life in such exploits, and is one of the few old-time trappers still to be found in the West." On October 5, 1899—after enduring five days of steady rain—the party launched its boats at Presidio and set off down the Rio Grande.

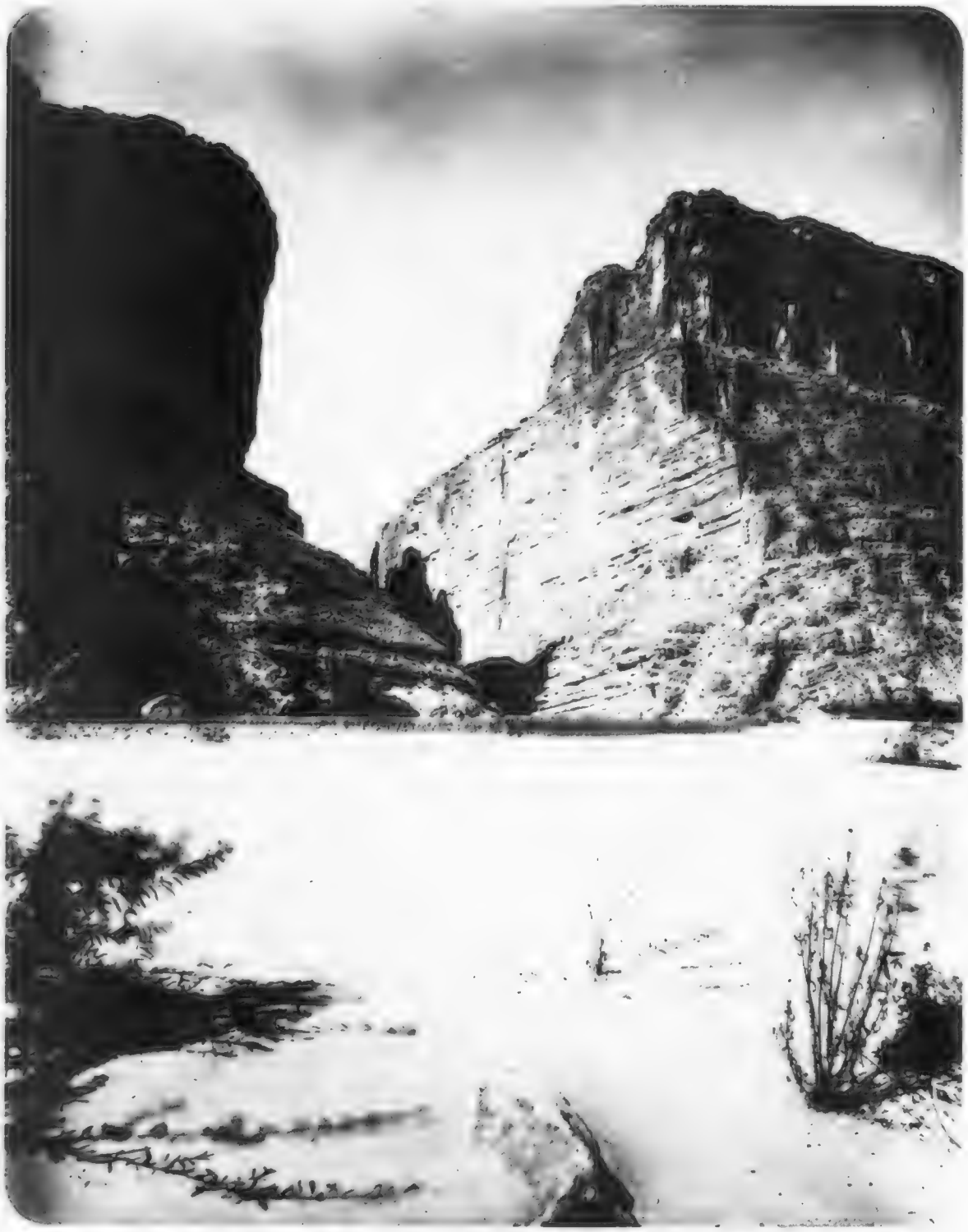
THE FIRST TWENTY MILES OF RIVER ran through the Bofecillos Mountains of Texas, or the Sierra San Carlos, as the corresponding peaks in Mexico are called. Over the centuries the frequent cliffs and side canyons had deposited thousands of rocks and boulders in the mainstream of the river, creating treacherous rapids. Ware, who had ventured into the canyons the year before, had lost a member of his party there as he attempted to maneuver his boat over slick rocks in the rapids. Because Hill and his party believed the region was infested with bandits and thieves, they kept their rifles loaded and near them at all times. At night the explorers hid their camp in the clumps of grass and brush that grew on the low sandbanks of the river, hoping that the bandits would not be able to find them in the dark.

The second morning the party reached Polvo, the last settlement before entering the canyonlands. By the ruins of old Fort Leaton, a private fort established in 1852 by rancher and merchant Ben Leaton, Hill found "half a dozen dreary adobe houses on a mud-bank and little more." The storekeeper, "who for some unknown reason had chosen this dreary place of exile," cast even more fear into Hill's men by showing them splotches of blood where his predecessor had been robbed and shot down the previous year. Hill and his team kept their rifles near them for the rest of the trip. To add to the suspense, the first canyon they entered, just a few miles below Polvo, was named Murderer's Canyon, supposedly because a murder victim had been found a few years before washed up on a sandbar.

Now the expedition entered canyon country. A few miles below Murderer's Canyon it passed through Fresno Canyon, where the paneled cliffs and steep banks rose ominously to heights of up to six hundred feet above the river. The explorers began to experience the isolation and lonesomeness that would accompany them for the next two hundred miles. Eons of erosion and pounding by the Rio Grande had created beautiful and unique formations in the canyon—vertical columns, massive red walls. Hoping for something even better, Hill scaled one of the walls for a look at the top of the mesa, only to realize that the canyons harbored most of the life in the Big Bend. "The sight of . . . the stony, soilless hills . . . almost within reach of the torrent of life-giving waters below, the blessing of which it was never to receive, was shocking and repulsive." Simultaneously, Hill realized how helpless his party would be should they lose their boats.

The freaks of nature that combine to produce the unique geological formations of the Big Bend often result in strange illusions, and many visitors have felt compelled to describe the country as "weird." Hill was no exception. The country below Murderer's Canyon became "more weird," he wrote. Carved from the yellow, dirty-colored volcanic tuff, the rocks formed what he pronounced to be an almost perfect reproduction of the Egyptian Sphinx. With this image before him, the sandy, muddy waters of the Rio Grande naturally reminded him of the Nile River.

Many features of the Big Bend had not yet received names when Hill made his trip. Governor Rabago y Teran had named a number of features in 1747, and the Boundary Survey teams of 1852 and '53 had applied a few more terms. Some of these, such as Mount Emery, have been retained. But Hill had the opportunity to name several other notable landmarks and canyons. The canyon that the party encountered on the



The lower mouth of Santa Elena Canyon, where the Rio Grande suddenly emerges from a vertical-walled chasm into the sunbaked desert, presented one of the most spectacular vistas of the journey. The cliffs at right are about 1,800 feet in height.

third day he called Black Rock Canyon. This picturesque, open canyon has been cut from a level plateau by centuries of erosion. The river meanders so aimlessly through this canyon that it required Hill's expedition the entire day to reach the next suitable campsite between Black Rock and Santa Elena canyons.

The next morning the party approached Santa Elena Canyon—the Grand Canyon of the Rio Grande. Only a few persons had previously managed to pass through this chasm. The Mexican Boundary Survey team in 1852 had pronounced it impassable when one member hiked as far into the canyon as he could, then returned to report that it appeared dangerous. Another member climbed up upon the Mesa de Anguila, from which the canyon is carved, and peered down into the abyss. He was perhaps the first American to see the rock slide which even today creates an almost impassable rapids. The members of this expedition—who reportedly allowed an empty boat to drift through the gorge had seen it come out

splintered—bypassed the canyon. Hill, however, was more daring. "We rowed straight for the narrow slit in the mountain," he reported. "The river makes a sudden bend as it enters the canyon, and almost in the twinkling of an eye we passed out of the desert glare into the dark and silent depths of its gigantic walls. . . ." The three boats were confined in a channel less than twenty-five feet wide. The sheer cliffs of the canyon "rose straight toward the sky," leaving no bank upon which to land. The current became so swift that the explorers could float the boats through without putting the oars in the water, yet the water rushed along with hardly a "ripple or gurgle." "We sat in admiration of the superb precipices which hemmed us in on each side," remembered Hill. "The solemnity of the scene was increased by the deathlike stillness which prevailed and by the thought of those who had tried the journey and either lost their lives or narrowly escaped destruction."

Hill's reflective mood was soon shattered. Just a mile inside the canyon he encountered the rock slide that had prevented the entry of the Mexican Boundary Survey team. One of the sheer cliffs of the canyon had caved in, leaving debris scattered across the breadth of the river, in some places two hundred feet high. The water was not dammed up, however, since it could find paths between and under the massive boulders. Hill and his companions landed their boats on the rocks and set out to explore the slide. After a brief inspection, it became apparent that they would have to portage over the rocks. Thorny plants had to be cut away and a path cleared. Then the dreary unloading began. The men carried each of the 300-pound boats and its contents up 180 feet, then back down to the river. The entire operation took three days. The party had to spend three nights on the rocks and appropriately named the place Camp Misery.

Hill was deeply impressed by the Santa Elena Canyon. His words are more descriptive than the photographs he took, which have deteriorated from age. "The austerity of the cliffs is softened by colors which camera or pen cannot reproduce," he wrote. "These rich tints are like the yellow marbles of Portugal and Algiers, warmed by reddening tones which become golden in the sunlight." He was surprised to find no animals living in the canyon. The men found traces of animal life, but saw only a few bats and quails, which seemed as trapped as themselves. Hill watched the quails attempt to fly out of the canyon. They would rise several hundred feet only by the severest effort, then tire and soar back to the rocks at the bottom of the canyon. His own situation, he reflected, was just as hopeless. Should there be a flood, or should the explorers lose their boats, there would be no way to get out of the canyon.

Hill's worst fears were almost confirmed after the third day at the rock slide. As the men were loading the boats to continue the trip, they heard a tremendous roar coming from up the canyon—a flash flood. They had no choice but to throw the remainder of their gear into the boats and take the chance that they would be able to stay afloat. Fortunately, although the speed of its current increased considerably, the river rose only a few inches.

As the expedition continued on down the canyon, the walls to either side increased in altitude. "Just as they reached their greatest height, some seventeen hundred and fifty feet, our boats suddenly emerged into the sunlit desert," marvelled Hill. The mouth of the Santa Elena Canyon is probably the best-known feature of the Big Bend. Its steep walls of massive limestone once formed a giant fault, through which the river has eroded its path. The Spaniards who saw the entrance found the canyon walls so steep that they could not explore it. Lieutenant Echols called it the Grand Puerta of the Rio Grande. Hill's party was equally impressed. "Looking back, the beautiful outlines of the east cliff of the plateau of Santa Helena [*sic*] from which we had emerged, were seen. We lingered long in contemplation of this most remarkable feature."

As HILL AND HIS PARTY drifted through the desert region between Santa Elena and Mariscal canyons, they viewed a large portion of what is today a national park. The most notable features of the land are the Chisos Mountains, a small circular mountain range making up a portion of the southern Rocky Mountain chain. Today the Chisos have the unique distinction of being the only mountain range completely contained within a national park. When Hill saw them, they were surrounded by rumor and curiosity. Just the name "Chisos" proved a mystery for years. Although it was derived from the Chisos Indians, who inhabited the Big Bend during the eighteenth century, Hill speculated that it might originally have come from a Spanish term, which he translated "ghosts."

The explorers also saw the distinctive Mule Ears Peaks, a peculiar formation several miles from the Chisos. Its two limestone shafts can be seen for a distance of twenty miles or more. Hill suggested that the wagoners who drove thousands of mules down the Chihuahua Trail that passed through the Big Bend en route from San Antonio to Chihuahua named the peaks after the balky animals they depended on for their livelihood. As Hill neared Mariscal Canyon, Cow Heaven came into view—a peak that was named, it seems, when one of the cowboys in the area observed that a cow left there would surely have to go to heaven because there was no grass for food.

Hill reported that he entered the first of two canyons bearing the name San Vicente just as he passed the southernmost apex of the river. The canyon he entered was Mariscal. Perhaps he thought of Mariscal as two canyons—divided by the point near the middle, where the candilella wax camp is located today—for Mariscal is certainly larger than any of the canyons between it and Boquillas, the next of the three major canyons of the Rio Grande. (The wax from the candilella plant, that grows wild throughout the Big Bend, is a

ALL HILL PHOTOS: UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER

Hill exposed this plate in Temple Canyon, some fifty miles downstream from the point where the Rio Grande turns to the northeast. This canyon had been surveyed from its river banks in 1853, but Hill's was probably the first scientific expedition to float through it.

high grade vegetable wax used in record making, in the "lost wax" method of sculpture casting, and in various other industries where a fine wax is needed.)

After floating through Mariscal, Hill and his party came onto the old Spanish presidio San Vicente, which by then only consisted of "extensive roofless walls of old adobe buildings standing in an uninhabited region. . . ." They passed through Hot Springs Canyon and noticed the frequent springs that Hill guessed doubled the volume of the river for the next fifty miles. Then they reached the small silver-mining town of Boquillas, Texas, where Hill saw a store, a customs house, and a post office. He mentioned the cable tram that crossed the river, connecting the village with a silver smelter on the Mexican side. Just beyond the smelter was the Mexican town of Boquillas, which Hill estimated to have approximately two thousand inhabitants in 1899.

The backdrop for the villages and mining camps is the magnificent Sierra del Carmen, into which the river seems to disappear. As Hill approached the barrier, he saw that the "river cuts another vertical chasm, which is even more worthy of the name of the Grand Canyon than that of the Sierra de Santa Helena [*sic*]." Noting that the men of the Mexican Boundary Survey bypassed Boquillas Canyon in 1852, Hill and his party forged on. He found obvious similarities among

Boquillas and the other two major canyons: all were carved from the same limestone, columns and peaks populated them, and the "great yellow walls were cut from base to summit by wonderful fissures filled with white calcite or vermillion-colored iron ore." At night the walls of Boquillas served as reflecting boards for the bright moon. "Long before its face could be seen," wrote Hill, "its light would tip the pinnacles and upper strata of the cliffs, still further gilding the natural yellows of the rocks." Boquillas, the longest of the Rio Grande canyons, required several days to float.

After passing Stillwell Crossing and Temple Canyon, Hill and his party began to turn eastward as the river meandered toward its eventual southeastern course to the Gulf of Mexico. Castle Butte, one of the notable landmarks of the Maravillas Canyon area, caught Hill's attention. Then, as the explorers entered yet another canyon, they came upon another hot springs. "The sight of this natural bath of warm water was tempting to tired and dirty men, and here we made our first and only stop for recreation," wrote Hill. And the springs are still as tempting. Almost every party that runs the rapids of these lower canyons today stops at Hot Springs to bathe and to refill the water jugs. "We literally soaked for hours in its delightful waters," recalled Hill, "stopping occasionally to soap and scrub our linen."

At Hot Springs Hill noted another phenomenon of the area. "The air was so clear in this country that one always underestimated the magnitude of the relief." As the men relaxed at Hot Springs, they guessed at the height of a nearby cliff; none of the estimates exceeded 500 feet. Hill then climbed up the cliff and measured it at 1,650 feet.

Hill traversed all the lower canyons without mentioning the several rapids—Hot Springs, Upper Madison (or Burro), Lower Madison (or Horseshoe), and Panther. But they were there. Lt. Nathaniel Michler, who surveyed the region for the Mexican Boundary Survey team in 1853, noted that rapids would make that part of the river forever unnavigable. Now these same rapids attract numbers of white-water canoeists each year and lead some to declare this portion of the Rio Grande one of the wildest rivers in North America.

Hill also noted the danger from flash flood that exists in the numerous side canyons of the river. His guide, MacMahon, had been caught in a flood on a previous trip and had escaped only by scaling the wall of the canyon. Flash floods are still a great danger, since the long, dry canyons drain huge areas on both sides of the river. San Francisco Canyon, for example, drains an approximately two hundred-square-mile area south and east of Marathon, Texas. Even a small rain, collected and reduced to such a constricted area, can create a flash flood in the canyon.

As the expedition crossed the 102nd meridian Hill noted that the character of the country changed—there were fewer canyons and more rapids as the river continued its downward descent toward the Gulf of Mexico. He unfortunately brought back no photographs of what he considered to be one of the most picturesque areas of the river—his cameras had by this time run out of film and the glass plate negatives he brought along did not turn out. At the village of Langtry, Hill and his party pulled their boats from the river and ended their historic float. There they met the legendary Judge Roy Bean, the "Law West of the Pecos," and for the first night in almost a month slept away from the constant roar of the river.

HILL'S FINDINGS disappointed the El Paso editor. There was no Grand Canyon in the Big Bend similar to the one on the Colorado. There was no Old Faithful Geyser spewing boiling water and foam on schedule. And Hill's trip had finally disproved popular rumors of a seven thousand-foot-deep canyon. (The Boundary Survey had calculated the heights at much more realistic figures in 1852, but the rumors had persisted.) The journalist carried only the brief wire service account of the trip in his newspaper. But Hill's colorful report did nothing to dispel the reports of cut-throat bandits lurking behind each cliff, or to correct the fanciful tales of the tricks that nature plays on unsuspecting intruders. Hill, in fact, might have started a few rumors himself. His description in *Century Magazine* of the Chisos Mountains as ghost mountains was probably the first time that legend ever appeared in print.

Today the Big Bend is appreciated for a variety of unique characteristics. Biologists declare it to be home for dozens of rare or almost extinct birds and plants. Geologists conduct studies of the caves, canyons, and mountains of the Big Bend each year. And outdoorsmen have long valued the beauty and solitude of the region. "The canyons of the Rio Grande are the longest and least known" in the United States, concluded Hill in 1901. "They have been . . . the least accessible to man. . . ." They still are.

Although Hill is not directly responsible for the interest that led to the establishment of the Big Bend National Park, his article played an important role. In 1931 a rookie state legislator from Abilene, R. M. Wagstaff, became interested in the Big Bend. Researching the subject, the lawmaker soon found Hill's article in *Century*, which remains one of the best works on the region. Wagstaff thrust the article before State Representative Everett E. Townsend, of Alpine, demanding to know if it were factual. Townsend demurred on the part of the bandits, but agreed that all Hill had said about the land was true. Wagstaff and Townsend thereafter cosponsored legislation creating Texas Canyons State Park. In 1936 the federal government approved the idea of the Big Bend National Park. The park—officially established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944—is the most lasting result of Hill's expedition.

Ronnie C. Tyler *is curator of history at the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, Fort Worth. He is author of* Santiago Vidaurri in the Southern Confederacy *and co-editor of* Slave Narratives of Texas, *both published in 1973.*

Pueblo, Colorado, in the 1860s. Population: about 200, plus an indeterminate number of roving Arapahoes, Utes, Mexican teamsters, and American horse thieves.

Once part of a lumberyard, the tiny building at left became the Colorado Chieftain's *first editorial office and printing plant and also doubled as living quarters for the staff.*

★ The Strife and Struggle of a ★ Newspaper in the Old West ★

A Frontier Doctor Turns Publisher

by Barron Beshoar

Hippocrates in a Red Vest, *just published by the American West Publishing Company, is the biography of Michael Beshoar, a physician, editor, and businessman who brought his compassion and healing talents to the frontier and envisioned the new land as one of myriad opportunities and exciting challenges. During the early years of the Civil War Beshoar served as a Confederate surgeon. Later he was employed by the Union Army in the same capacity at Fort Kearny, Nebraska Territory, and for a time was mayor of Dobytown, Nebraska, one of the toughest settlements in the Midwest. In 1867 the ambitious young doctor took a wagonload of drugs to the Colorado Territory, where he opened the first drugstore between Denver and Santa Fe and established a medical practice in the towns of Pueblo and Trinidad. The following article, adapted from the biography of Beshoar written by his grandson, describes his efforts to establish Pueblo's first newspaper,* The Chieftain, *an enterprise which is still published today, 105 years later.*

A MEDICAL PRACTICE, A DRUG STORE, and various business operations, spread out as they were over such a large area of the Colorado Territory, should have been enough to keep a man busy, but Dr. Michael Beshoar was nevertheless ready for new enterprises, particularly the newspaper business. There was no newspaper nearer than Denver, and he felt strongly that Pueblo and the rest of southern Colorado must have one if they were to move ahead. A newspaper would provide the region with a political voice; by making known the potential of the area it would lure settlers; and finally it would act as a civilizing influence to insure law and order. Of course there were problems: in this miserable winter of 1867-68, times were hard, money was difficult to come by, the weather was extremely bad, and hostile Indian bands were raising such hob along the trails that the military had held up traffic between Fort Larned, Kansas, and Fort Lyon, Colorado. Certainly it was an unpromising atmosphere for a new business of any kind.

"Looking at it purely as an opening, it seems to be a big thing," the young physician jokingly told friends in Pueblo, Canon City, and Trinidad as he began a campaign to raise $3,000 in advance subscriptions and advertising. At the outset he intended making the proposed newspaper a Democratic organ, but soon after beginning his canvass he decided he would publish a nonpartisan paper—as he discovered the Democrats talked a good game but were tight when it came to money. In Fremont County, for example, Democratic party leader, Thomas Macon, had started out with enthusiasm to raise funds for the venture, but had finally written the doctor:

"I have seen almost every man in the county and have succeeded in getting but three who would agree to sign the subscription paper & they would only agree to five dollars. I never was more deceived in my life. I had hoped and been led to believe from conversations with different men that I could get from three to four hundred dollars, but when I called on them to show their faith by their works they showed the white feather most ingloriously. They all say they will take the paper and some say they will take two copies and I believe they will, but they are afraid to pay anything until they see the paper."

It was the same story every place: lots of encouragement but little in the way of hard cash. But the doctor was convinced that he was an agent of progress and that he would play an important role "in the development of one of the greatest empires in the world on its way to destined greatness" if he could just get a newspaper started. If he couldn't raise enough money to launch his paper and carry it during its early months, then he would do as he had done before: start it on credit and nurture it with what he could make practicing medicine and carrying on a drug business.

Naming his new enterprise the *Colorado Chieftain,* Beshoar ordered a Washington hand press, type, and other printing equipment, including a stock of paper, through Stebbins & Porter of Denver. For a newspaper office he purchased a tiny two-room frame building on East Fourth Street in Pueblo that had once served as part of a lumber yard. Since there were no printers in the southern part of the territory, he went to Denver to find one. Editor Woodbury of the *Tribune* had none to spare but suggested that a good man might be found on the *Colorado Transcript* in Golden City. In Golden, Beshoar told

BOTH PHOTOS: STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO

Transcript editor and proprietor Capt. George West that he was looking for "a good compositor and a good job printer, and one who can write locals if necessary."

Captain West said he had a man subbing in his office who was a gentleman in the full sense and possessed all the required qualifications, but who was, unfortunately, "on his last legs with consumption." Beshoar asked if the man was temperate and, assured that he was, said he'd like to meet him as he'd rather have a dying but temperate printer than a vigorous drunken one. Taken to the back shop, the physician was presented to Sam McBride. He liked him on sight and, after outlining what he proposed to do in Pueblo and showing McBride a duplicate of his order for press and material, offered him the job as foreman and job printer. He would be allowed to pay his personal expenses out of current receipts and receive as salary half of the net profits for a period of three years. Any losses would be the responsibility of Michael Beshoar and would be paid by him. In addition, McBride would be listed in the masthead as coproprietor of the *Chieftain*.

COLLECTION OF BARRON BESHOAR

Doctor-publisher Michael Beshoar drank his whiskey neat and usually carried a pistol tucked under his waistcoat.

Sam McBride's eyes glistened. "It's a layout," he said. "But I'm so far gone with consumption I probably won't live six months. And in those six months I probably couldn't be of much service."

"Take off your shirt," the physician said.

While the other printers watched, McBride was given an examination.

"You don't have consumption," Beshoar said. "You have a severe and chronic bronchitis, tracheitis and laryngitis. You come to Pueblo with me and I'll make a stout and healthy man out of you before the end of the three years."

"I'll take it," McBride said.

Since Sam was poor as a "lame coyote," in the words of his new associate, the physician gave him money for coach fare, told him to get on down to Pueblo, and do what he could around the building until the press and other equipment arrived. Then Dr. Beshoar took the stage from Golden to Central City, spent a couple of days looking over mining properties, and returned to Denver, where he found his paper and press waiting. He was still short a thousand dollars of what he needed to pay for the shipment and everyone at Stebbins & Porter looked grave for a few minutes, but the matter was settled when Henry M. Porter sat down, wrote out a personal check for the needed $1,000, and handed it over, saying, "Pay me back when you can."

When the Washington hand press and a small job press had been installed in the *Chieftain*'s diminutive quarters, Beshoar told his new partner they should plan on getting out their first issue in late June but that he hoped they could start taking in printing jobs immediately as they needed every cent they could get. Sam McBride agreed and the two men set about completing their office. They made the first printer's stone out of pine boards. The editorial desk was a large box in which glass had been shipped; they nailed legs onto the crate and set it up in the front room of the two-room building. A small barrel was sawed halfway through the middle for the editor's chair: the unsawed upper half made the back, and the perfect lower half, filled with straw and covered with gunny sacks, provided the cushion. Sleeping bunks, three tiers high, were built into the front room to permit use of the editorial and business office as a dormitory at night.

"I'll take the top one because it is warmest in the summer," the physician told Sam, who coughed before he wryly observed: "And in the wintertime too."

DOCTOR BESHOAR KNEW he could not practice medicine in two towns ninety miles apart, make long calls off the beaten paths when emergencies arose, solicit subscriptions and printing over the vast territory, and still do all the writing for his *Chieftain* too. His solution was to set up a scholarly volunteer editorial board to carry the writing burden. Several of the best-educated and most distinguished citizens of the community agreed to serve, providing the *Chieftain* with an

editorial staff far superior to the crude, barely literate editors who held forth in the average frontier newspaper shop. The board members included Wilbur Fisk Stone, a Pueblo lawyer who would later become a member of the Federal Court of Private Claims; George A. Hinsdale, another lawyer and a fine writer who would someday be lieutenant governor of Colorado; Moses Hallett (sometimes known as "Moses the Meek"), chief justice of the territorial supreme court; Henry C. Thatcher, member of a prominent banking-business family; the Rev. F. S. Winslow, rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church; and Dr. H. C. Miller, surgeon at Fort Reynolds.

Although Beshoar had told Sam McBride they would probably not get their first issue on the press until late June, they finally set the third week in May as the time for their bow to the area. As they neared the target date, M. C. Reed, a local genius who practiced dentistry, paperhanging, photography, and sign-painting when he wasn't drinking, made them a sign labeled "Chieftain Printing Office." He painted it on canvas tacked to a board, which was then put up with one end nailed to the *Chieftain* building and the other to a post set up six feet in front of the entrance. It made the building look like a real newspaper office. Sam printed up letterheads, ornate affairs that listed M. Beshoar and Sam McBride as proprietors and offered "Every Variety, Plain and Fancy Printing, executed at the lowest prices!" The price of the newspaper was set at five dollars a year, three dollars for six months, and twenty-five cents per copy.

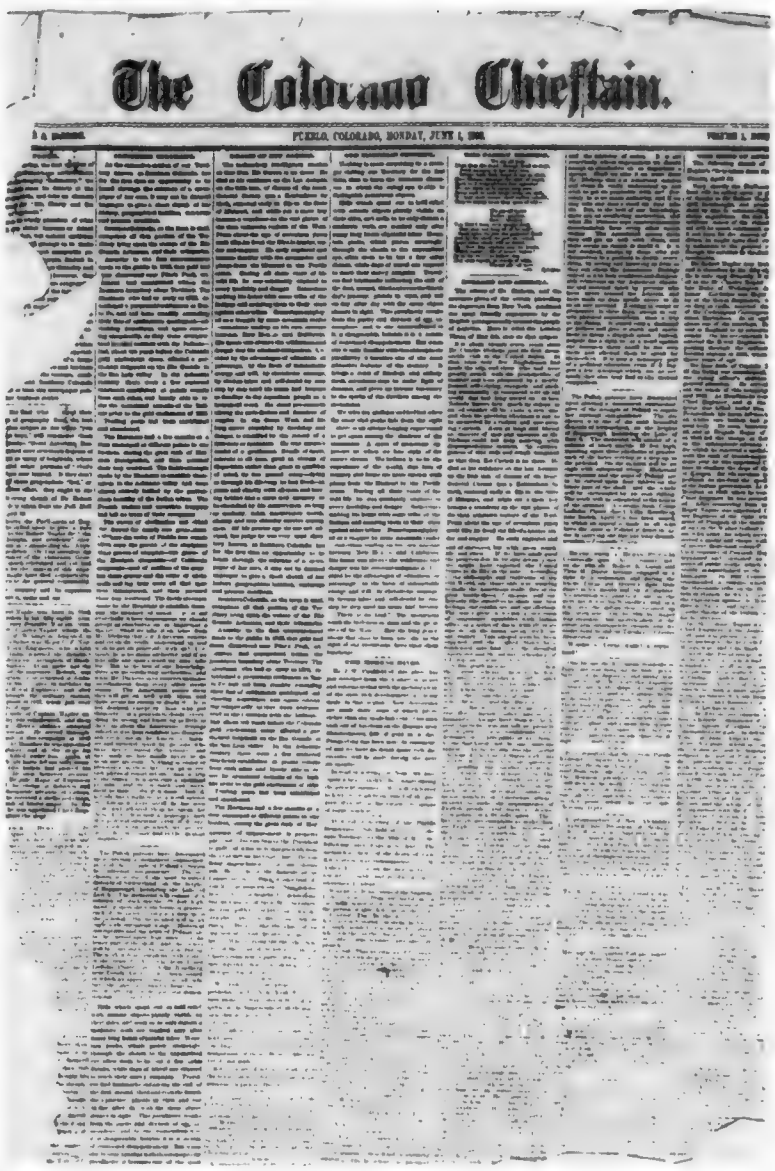
The doctor went back to Trinidad to try to collect some of his medical accounts and raise more subscriptions. He had not been gone more than four days when he received a letter from Sam:

"Dear Sir: Have been busy painting the sashdoors, etc. of the office, and if I can get enough glass tomorrow I will put it in. Then the building will be ready for use. . . . I had engaged Charley French in Denver as a printer, but he has decided not to come and will send Leonard. The latter is dissipated and not nearly as good a printer as French, but we can arrange this matter when you come over. You must come over as soon as you can. . . ."

The May 21 target date came and went without a newspaper as a result of one foul-up after another, but eleven days later half the population of Pueblo turned out, including the distinguished contributing editors, to see the first issue, dated June 1, 1868, roll off the press at the rate of 200 per hour. It was a pretty handsome job. Unlike other newspapers in the territory, it carried no advertising on its front page. The heads were small, one-line, ten-point cap affairs, but the important thing was that the seven-column front page of the four-page fledgling was filled with well-written stories.

A lead article, written by Wilbur Fisk Stone, reported and eulogized the recent passing of Gen. Kit Carson at Las Animas (a subject of special interest to local residents, as just two months previously the famous frontiersman had passed through Pueblo and had been examined by Dr. Beshoar, who

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO


The Colorado Chieftain.

PUEBLO, COLORADO, MONDAY, JUNE 1, 1868

The June 1, 1868,* Chieftain *was published on a shoestring, but the enterprise survived and still thrives today.

discovered the presence of serious heart damage). Another story recorded the arrival a few days earlier of the new telegraph line from Denver, and a third reported the fate of two army deserters who had stolen four horses and been pursued by a posse for fifty miles before being caught: "We might, by giving romantic details, make a sensational story for Eastern newspapers . . . but we choose simply to say that without any loss of time, or expensive preparations, they were hanged to the limb of a noble old cottonwood until they were dead. Such is the retributive end meted out to this class of border ruffians."

And in line with the editor-in-chief's belief that a newspaper had civic responsibilities, the first issue of the *Chieftain* said sharply: "We note that a good many hogs are running at large in our streets in violation of the statutes. Their presence in the streets is a nuisance which ought to be abated. Why is the law not enforced?" Like any other newspaper, before or since, this one didn't fail to carry a buttery bit on the doings of the town's most prosperous merchant, who might be ex-

Continued on page 62

A Matter of Opinion

"How Many Indians Were Killed?": A Commentary

Don Russell's essay "How Many Indians Were Killed?" in the July issue of THE AMERICAN WEST *examined both sides of a controversial and often emotionally clouded area of western history. Herewith we present some readers' comments on Mr. Russell's article.*

TO THE EDITOR:

I consider your July 1973 edition outstanding. But it is obvious that Don Russell in his article "How Many Indians Were Killed?" is reacting to the Dee Brown, Dustin Hoffman, AIM, prevalent white pro-Indian sympathy bit. While I sympathize with Mr. Russell's reaction, he has succumbed to the historian's pitfall of the lawyer arguing his case rather than the judge weighing the facts.

In his attempt to minimize Indian casualties resulting from U.S. military arms he implies (though qualifies) that Indian statements concerning their own casualties are much more reliable than white exaggerations. I strongly question this.

Considering the nature of the engagements of Wagon Box and Beecher Island, Powell's and Forsyth's claims seem no more false than the Indian statements. Stanley Vestal's known lack of sophistication should preclude any strong reliance on his figures; probably somewhere between 40 and 100 Indians were killed at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

Most revealing is Crook's fight with the Sioux on the Rosebud. Crook, not one to exaggerate, reported thirteen enemy bodies found on the battlefield following the fight. The Indians admitted to eleven. Add to this the fact that Indians in warfare went to any lengths to retrieve their own wounded and dead from the battlefield. A melee such as that at the Rosebud I am sure afforded them ample opportunity to do so. At least half a dozen of the Indian bodies found in the great camp following the Little Big Horn fight were in such decomposed condition to warrant the belief that those dead had resulted from the fight at the Rosebud. My estimate is that Indians killed in that fight were at least double what the Indians admitted.

Randall T. Kane
La Junta, Colorado

TO THE EDITOR:

Mr. Don Russell seems to deserve commendation for his article "How Many Indians Were Killed?" He has effectively set the record straight regarding Indian deaths in combat with the U.S. Army during the nineteenth century. Little argument can be found with his statistics or his reasoning as far as it goes.

It is not enough, however, to point a self-conscious, defensive finger at "indiginous" diseases or intertribal warfare as greater Indian killers than "blue jackets." Mr. Russell, like so many military historians, sees only the battlefield exchange as relevant and uses the impersonal killers like disease or starvation as an acceptable alternative to explain the majority of deaths. More significant than the number killed, be they major chiefs or small band leaders, women and children, or warriors, may be what the deaths meant to the Indian peoples.

The significant fatalities relate to the Indian way of life, economic, social, political and religious. Percentages of deaths are only statistics and only relevant when applied to the result those deaths have on a culture. Imposition of European values, agrarian pursuits, town life, and other valued anglo cultural elements, along with death by war and disease, came close to driving the Indians to extinction, if not in numbers, then as a functioning cultural element in American life.

I sympathize with Mr. Russell's frustration over grossly misrepresented facts in published accounts of the Indian Wars. I have to agree that western history has been subjected not only to fiction presented as fact in this subject area, but even to published paranoic recriminations about our treatment of the red man. But to indicate, as he does in this article, that because the Indian was sometimes "barbaric" in our terms, "our" actions were all but "civilized" is equally wrong. The real point is that we should have done better, not on the battlefield where our technology and numbers were superior, but in our hearts and through our carefully devised public institutions.

I suppose that those Americans today who pity the lot of the historic red man do so out of a disillusionment in our supposed humanitarianism, brought out most forcefully by our experience in Vietnam. We have become painfully aware that despite the better elements of our American system, we have serious flaws as a people not unlike those of other great societies. It seems most relevant now for the historian to become more of a humanist and to discover what our frontier Indian experience has to tell us without the impediments of guilt or apologies.

Sidney B. Brinckerhoff
Director, Arizona Historical Society
Tucson, Arizona

A MATTER OF OPINION *is provided as an open forum. Contributions from our readers are invited, but should be limited to 750 words and must be signed.*

Dwellers at the Source: Southwestern Indian Photographs of A. C. Vroman

REVIEWED BY RAYMOND FRIDAY LOCKE

FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST Paul Cézanne often told his students to "get to the source of a thing" in their painting and, therefore, "treat nature by the cylinder, the sphere, the cone." I'm not sure that an obscure Pasadena, California, photographer named Adam Clark Vroman ever heard Cézanne's words, but he seems to have taken the advice of the artist. Vroman, who owned a bookstore, was an amateur photographer who began taking pictures of Southwest Indians the same year that Cézanne achieved his peak of fame, 1895. No doubt the similarity of what one achieved with paintbrush and the other with a camera was accidental.

Dwellers at the Source: Southwestern Indian Photographs of A. C. Vroman, 1895–1904 by William Webb and Robert A. Weinstein *(Grossman, New York, 1973; 213 pp., biblio., appen., $25.00).*

The fact is, Vroman's photographs most often closely resemble the paintings of that school of artists just coming into their own in Europe; they seldom look like the photographs his contemporaries were taking back East. Several excellent photographers — particularly Timothy H. Sullivan, L. A. Huffman, and William Stinson Soule—journeyed west to take photographs of Indians in the two decades following the Civil War. Their work, undertaken under difficult circumstances, cannot be praised enough. But by the time Vroman came along photography was being taken very seriously as Art. Most photographs of the period are hopelessly romantic and the commercial photographers who ventured west were not, for the most part, interested in either creating beauty or taking photographs of Indians who were unable to pay for them.

Adam Clark Vroman had no interest whatsoever in practicing commercial photography. Remarkably, as the authors of this volume point out, he also remained aloof of the banal artistic pretensions of the eastern photographers of his time.

When he left Pasadena in the summer of 1895 to photograph the Hopi Indians of Arizona, Vroman had already developed a straight photographic style. The results of his several sojourns among the Hopi, as well as visits to the Zuni, the Rio Grande Pueblos, and the Navajos are remarkable, even by today's standards.

Too, Vroman arrived in the Southwest at a time when Indian culture still retained much of its old quality, although it was already being threatened by anthropologists who were beginning to study the "curious savages," by missionaries who were beginning to convert them to Christianity, and by the federal government, which, having rounded up the Indians, was beginning to strip them of their ways of life. Ten years later would have perhaps been too late for Vroman's work to picture the Indians as human beings, products of a living culture, the authors point out, "that deserved to be preserved, . . . [not] as curiosities or barbarians."

Vroman admired the Indians very much and they, in turn allowed him to photograph them at work, in their homes, and even during the execution of their more sacred ceremonials. Even the photographs he took on the morning after he first arrived to visit the Hopis, at the First Mesa village of Sichimovi, are stunning in their quiet dignity. One marvelous picture is of several Hopi men and a woman who have dropped in to welcome the white visitors. It will be considered all the more remarkable by anyone who has tried to photograph the Hopi or the inside of a Hopi home in recent years!

The biography offered here of Vroman is sketchy. Apparently he was a very private and, I gather, even a rather dull man. He certainly was modest; he termed himself "only an amateur" photographer when he was actually one of the best of his time. There is no sensationalism, no propaganda, no squalor in his work. Instead there is dignity and a remarkable craftsmanship.

Vroman was born in La Salle, Illinois, April 15, 1856, of Dutch parentage. Nothing is known of his boyhood except that he attended Illinois public schools. In 1874 he began working for the railroad and, in 1892, he married Esther H. Griest and soon afterwards moved to Pasadena. His wife died two years later, and then he opened the bookstore in partnership with J. D. Glasscock.

The shop quickly prospered, allowing Vroman to visit the Hopi country in 1895. Seven trips to Indian country followed. After 1904, he, as far as we know, never again visited his Indian friends. His later photographs, we're told, are of the uninspired tourist variety.

The presentation of Vroman's work here is almost as remarkable as his own achievement; the prints are beautifully reproduced and presented in a commendable straightforward manner.

The authors have served Vroman and his photographs well, especially in the captions. They do seem to be confused as to when the Navajos entered the Southwest; on one hand they tell us it was the middle of the sixteenth century and a few lines later they indicate it was a hundred years later. In either case they're wrong and here it matters little, as this book really isn't about Navajos and Indian prehistory. It's about a bookseller from Pasadena who made a remarkable achievement in the history of photography and in the documentation of Southwest Indians as he saw them. In this area, as can be said for Vroman's photographs, the work of authors Webb and Weinstein is substantial and of enduring value.

Raymond Friday Locke *is author and editor of several works of western history. His current project is a history of the Shoshoni Indians of southern California.*

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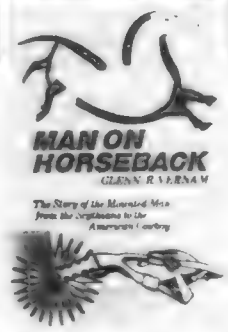

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A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West

REVIEWED BY RICHARD W. ETULAIN

THOSE WHO HAVE READ Wallace Stegner's Pulitzer-Prize-winning *Angle of Repose* (1971) will be especially interested in this volume, for much of Stegner's brilliant novel is based on the life of the late nineteenth century illustrator and author, Mary Hallock Foote. Mrs. Foote (1847–1938) was born and reared in upstate New York and completed her education at the Cooper Institute in New York City. In 1876 she married mining and irrigation engineer Arthur De Wint Foote and thereafter followed him throughout the West, moving from California, to Colorado, to Idaho, and back to California again. This book is an autobiographical account of her earliest years in New York and in the West—from the 1850s to the turn of the century. Although Mrs. Foote lived several years into the Depression and wrote this book in the 1920s, she devotes little space here to her life in the twentieth-century West.

A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West: The Reminiscences of Mary Hallock Foote edited with an introduction by Rodman W. Paul *(Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif., 1972; 416 pp., illus., notes, index, $8.50).*

The memoirs are full of Mrs. Foote's reactions to the West. As an artist and writer she was attracted to the picturesque valleys and mountain areas, intrigued by the varied social classes in the mining camps, and repulsed by the isolation and barrenness of other frontier areas. Her changing reactions plot her transformation from a tourist and local colorist to a close observer of western life.

But Mary Hallock Foote never really became a westerner; she was too tied to her eastern genteel backgrounds to embrace life in a new region that often affronted her Victorian sensibilities. Her autobiography reveals that she and her family were "aliens" in the West; they preferred to associate with their own kin and with a few friends of similar interests and background.

Mrs. Foote's reminiscences betray this provincial outlook. As she admitted, she lived a sheltered life and rarely met or associated with men or women who were not mining engineers or persons of refined tastes. One realizes that not only did she see more of the West than she participated in, but that even then her prejudices kept her from seeing some of the transitions the West was racing through during the last years of the nineteenth century. Mrs. Foote worried too much about what other people thought of her and her family; she was too conscious that her eastern friends might not think she had married well or that her husband was not ambitious or successful because he had not become wealthy.

Rodman Paul's introduction is an excellent summary of the events that influenced Mrs. Foote's life. The introduction and the editorial notes, products of the editor's examination of Mrs. Foote's published work and her unpublished correspondence, help explain gaps and vague references in the memoirs. Professor Paul has also tracked down and corrected many garbled literary allusions and quotations. One is amazed at the thoroughness of his detective work.

In short, this is the best published memoir of a woman who witnessed the end of the frontier. Because Mrs. Foote was an accomplished writer, her reminiscences will be valuable to students of western literature. Moreover, economic historians will be interested in the relationships suggested herein between eastern capital and western development. And we know too little about the history of women in the West; this book will add to our understanding of this elusive subject. Most of all, this volume reveals what it was like for an eastern woman to live in a region and culture that never satisfied her yearnings. Mrs. Foote summarized her life when she wrote her best friend: " 'I love my West when I am in the East.' "

Richard W. Etulain *is chairman of the History Department at Idaho State University. His brief study of Owen Wister will appear soon, and he is completing a work on Ernest Haycox and the Western.*

Ranch on the Laramie: A Memoir of an American Boyhood

REVIEWED BY SAMUEL A. HICKS

HERE IS A FORMULA for the glue that holds a nation together while growing to greatness. This saga involves a cattle ranching family in southeastern Wyoming, but its events could have happened in many places to grassroots people since the settlement of America began. It is a warm and earthy book — and coming at a time when youngsters express a sincere and universal desire to learn more of the culture of their forebears, should be made available to them in any and all languages. Its principal message affirms that no pioneering family ever had it easy. Difficulties and problems came and went with amazing regularity, and out of this adversity there evolved a society immensely self-reliant and ultimately endowed with a radiant philosophy of life. This story reaffirms that any isolated family who worked, suffered, studied, played, and worshipped together, automatically inherited compassion in large doses.

Ranch on the Laramie: A Memoir of an American Boyhood by Ted Olson *(Atlantic — Little, Brown, Boston, 1973; 240 pp., $6.95).*

The author of this soul-satisfying book enfolds his readers in the twice-daily milking, the bucket calf feeding, garden weeding, mosquito-bitten routine of his early life with homespun dexterity; and nowhere in the text does he seem conscious of being the gifted writer that he is. No penman from Shakespeare to Service could have extolled the qualities of his mother's buttermilk so gloriously; and any writer who can describe the sweet-chiming songs of red-winged blackbirds trilling "UNCLE Lee! UNCLE Lee!" and yellow-breasted meadowlarks piping "Oh geewhillicker-whillicker!" has a great thing going.

To those of us raised in log houses on Wyoming's high and wintry plateaus, and who received our elementary training in one-room multi-grade schools, *Ranch on the Larmie* naturally brings back a flood of heartwarming memories. The spring cattle drive, the hayfields, the kids' annual trip to town for new shoes, the winter feeding of livestock and the long evenings at home enriched by the tinny wonders of an Edison phonograph, were the same for half a century — only the geography changes. For those who, unfortunately, were denied this evolutionary life-style, here is a book of western Americana cleverly written and colorfully laced with humor. Throughout Ted Olson's soliloquy is the pleasing, positive conviction that with hard work and honesty there follow the usual good things of life, and that it really was, and is, worth all the effort.

Samuel A. Hicks *is constable of the Murrieta (Calif.) Judicial District and co-publisher of the historical quarterly,* The High Country.

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The Americanization of Alaska, 1867–1897 by Ted C. Hinckley (*Pacific Books, Palo Alto, Calif., 1972; 285 pp., illus., map, biblio., notes, index, $8.95).*

REVIEWED BY W. TURRENTINE JACKSON

FEW READERS or teachers of United States history have any real knowledge of events in Alaska between its purchase from Russia and the discovery of gold along the Klondike. Ted C. Hinckley has attempted to fill this void in social history in a single volume. His basic thesis is that the frontier experience in the "Great Land," 1867–1897, cannot be told in a neat conceptual framework. Moreover, events did not parallel the patterns of frontier development that Frederick J. Turner and his successors proclaimed. Pioneers came to Alaska by sea rather than by covered wagon. Farmers expecting to till the soil were conspicuously absent; those interested in the land were speculators in mining claims or urban real estate. Others came as missionaries, storekeepers, or to hold political appointments. Hinckley is keenly aware of the importance of comparative history and never misses an opportunity to draw parallels between numerous aspects of Alaskan development and patterns on the trans-Missouri frontier, such as comparison of pelagic sealing with the range cattle industry.

A chronological approach is effectively used in the narrative. Hinckley's discussion of the initial six-year period of "occupation" emphasizes the theme of negligence, illustrated by the failure of the United States to extend land laws to its new possession and to establish territorial government through an organic act. The basic economy of Alaska suffered between 1873–1877 as fur trappers, gold seekers, and whalers assumed the role of exploiters. The next decade brought both utilization and recognition. Salmon fishing and canning, tourism, organized missionary endeavor, and the establishment of scattered settlements by Americans were, in part, responsible for the change. Hinckley concludes that too much emphasis has been placed on injury done Alaska by a bad press during its first generation under the American flag. He also feels that Alaska became a part of the nation too soon, and that many of its economic and social problems could have been eliminated by intelligent planning and enlightened administration.

The author is more interested in people than in institutions. He dwells on the values and attitudes of men like Sheldon Jackson, missionary and promoter; Jack McQuesten, Yukon pioneer; and various governors including John H. Kinkhead and John G. Brady. Hinckley has a distinctive and dramatic style of writing, and patches of purple prose with heavy emphasis on the unusual, descriptive adjective abound. The book has been carefully organized, clearly written, and soundly based on the available literature, but this reviewer still finished it without a clear impression of just what transpired during the Americanization of Alaska. In all probability, this is more due to the complex nature of the subject than to any fault of the author.

W. Turrentine Jackson *is professor of history at the University of California, Davis, and the author or editor of six books, including* Wagon Roads West, Treasure Hill, *and* The Enterprising Scot.

Great American Deserts by Rowe Findley, photographs by Walter Meayers Edwards *(National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 1972; 207 pp., biblio., index, available by mail, $4.75).*

REVIEWED BY ROBERT H. LISTER

ROWE FINDLEY, a National Geographic senior editorial staffer, belongs to the new breed of desert rat. He did not set out in the desert with a grubstake to find an ore deposit nor attempt to eke out an existence by homesteading beside a desert oasis—but he has traveled extensively and understandably over the great American deserts. His account of those deserts and their natural and human history reflects a genuine admiration and respect for those vast lands that make up so much of western America.

Findley's narrative is a personal one, interspersed with quotes from scientists, old-timers, and previous literature. It is enjoyable reading and has a humanistic quality not found in more technical accounts. The numerous dramatic photographs, which are keyed to the text, are outstanding in quality.

All four American deserts—the Sonoran and Chihuahuan, lying in part south of the Mexican border, and the Mojave and Great Basin deserts of the United States—are considered. Environmental characteristics of the deserts. the impact that man has had upon them, and the opportunities and restrictions that they in turn place upon man, are all described. The lively, provocative text discusses geologic and climatic forces that have created the deserts, their plant and animal life, and desert people of the past and today. Sere wastelands, cool oases, jagged coasts, and high-standing mountain ranges are aspects of the deserts, as are a host of reptiles, rodents, birds, mammals, and even some fish. Extraordinary flora unique to deserts show the same remarkable ability to adapt to harsh environments as do the animal dwellers. Man, for various reasons, has lived in the American deserts from the time of the earliest Indians who made their simple living by hunting and collecting the natural resources of the desert. Later, more culturally advanced Indians cultivated the arid lands, sometimes aided by irrigation. More recently miners, ranchers, farmers, health seekers, and industrialists have come to the deserts. Towns have sprung into existence there; some have died as quickly after a brief florescence. Others have survived and have even grown into sprawling metropolises.

There still are places in the deserts where "you can see clear into forever," but Findley and many others of whom he writes share a concern for the future of our arid lands.

Robert H. Lister *is chief of the New Mexico Archaeological Center, a research center sponsored jointly by the National Park Service and the University of New Mexico, where he is a professor of anthropology.*

Timberline Ancients, photographs by David Muench, text by Darwin Lambert *(Charles H. Belding, Portland, 1972; 128 pp., illus., map, notes, $22.00).*

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL MCCLOSKEY

IN A MECHANICAL WORLD where things are changing much too fast, a spell is cast over us by ancient things. The spell is all the more intense when it is cast by living, growing entities. This explains the fascination that redwoods have for us, but the most ancient of all living things—bristlecone pines—have hardly been celebrated at all.

Now they are commemorated in *Timberline Ancients* by David Muench and Darwin Lambert. Scientists only began to appreciate the age of these trees *(Pinus Longreva)* in 1953 when Dr. Edmund Schulman discovered a specimen 1,500 years old, although John Muir had described this picturesque tree with its foxtail-like needles as early as 1878. Now a specimen 4,600 years old has been discovered in the White Mountains of California, and by cross-dating tree rings in dead wood with other evidence, the yearly record of their growth—and of the weather patterns that have influenced it—has been pushed back to 7000 B.C.

In the short text which accompanies the ninety photographs in this book, Darwin Lambert, an outdoor writer reared in Ely, Nevada, tells the story of the trees' discovery, the critical contribution they have made to research in climatology, and the status of efforts to protect them. Nature has done most to protect them by virtue of the fact that they grow only on the arid ridgetops of remote desert ranges in the Southwest. Their need to cope with adversity—rocky soils, high altitude, scant rainfall, scouring winds, and high doses of ultraviolet light —has bred a tree so tenacious and hardy that it outlives all other living things.

But now that man has discovered these trees, he may be the one threat to their survival. The oldest known example, the 4,900-year old "Prometheus" tree in the Wheeler Peak area of Nevada, was cut down by an impatient researcher in 1964. Their wood has a wonderful natural polish, and young trees are sought by the nursery trade. So far, little in the way of formal and lasting protection has been extended to bristlecone stands.

Muench's photographs artfully depict the stands in the seven major locations in the West where they are found, with those in the White Mountains and the Wheeler Peak area clearly the most impressive. While the twisted forms of these trees invite treatment as abstract art, Muench on the whole maintains a documentary approach that is satisfying for the purposes of this book.

Lambert's accompanying text is less satisfying in some ways. While fluently and forcefully written, it jumps around in an attempt to mix accounts of scientific research, personal experience, and philosophizing about man's place in nature. While the substance is appealing, the philosophizing becomes a bit repetitious and at times seems strained.

The layouts are well designed, and though the stark sans-serif type may not please everyone, the general graphic effect is one of high quality.

Michael McCloskey *is executive director of the Sierra Club. He was chief lobbyist for Redwood National Park and is deeply involved in efforts to protect natural areas in parks and other reserves.*

Tsali by Denton R. Bedford, illustrations by Dan B. Timmons *(Indian Historian Press, San Francisco, 1972; 257 pp., $9.00).*

REVIEWED BY BOB LEE

WHEN A MAN IS RIGHT, it kills his spirit to bend to a wrong without resisting." So stated a troubled Cherokee chief in the spring of 1838. At that time some seventeen thousand Cherokees in the adjacent sectors of North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama were being cruelly rounded up from their ancestral homes and started down the infamous "Trail of Tears" to unwanted lands west of the Mississippi.

The Cherokees were advised by their chiefs to practice passive resistance. They refused to voluntarily leave their homes within the two years alloted to them by the terms of a fraudulent treaty, so troops under Gen. Winfield Scott were sent to force their relocation. Their sadistic methods of carrying out this perfidious mission forms the basis of the book. Tsali was a middle-aged family man of no tribal stature when his people were driven like cattle to crude stockades. An estimated two thousand Cherokees died in these disease-ridden pens during the fourteen weeks they were held captive while awaiting transportation to northern Oklahoma. While being escorted under armed guard to one of the stockades, Tsali effected an escape for his family and himself. But a white soldier who had prodded Tsali's injured wife along the trail with bayonet stabs was accidentally killed during the escape.

Tsali's escape won him his first measure of greatness and he was regarded as a "common man's hero," for he had done what every other Cherokee man wanted —but lacked the courage—to do. Later Tsali voluntarily surrendered himself and three other male members of his family to be executed by his own people against their will in exchange for a promise that other Cherokees who had eluded the army's dragnet would be permitted their freedom. That promise was not honored. Tsali, however, achieved the martrydom the soldier chief so cunningly tried to prevent. He was killed; his spirit was not.

This poignant tale of how Tsali became a tribal legend is the work of an Indian with obviously keen understanding of Cherokee culture and traditions. The story is appropriately brought to the public by an all-Indian educational publishing house. It is simply illustrated by an Indian artist. Thus the book is a tripartite presentation of Indian history as the Cherokees experienced it. It partially offsets the oft-times distorted interpretations of Indian history produced by less sympathetic white authors.

Bob Lee *is president of the South Dakota State Historical Society and vice president-editor of the Black Hills Publishing Company.*

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The Joyous Journey of LeRoy R. and Ann W. Hafen: An Autobiography *(Arthur Clark, Glendale, Calif., and Fred A. Rosenstock, Denver, 1973; 334 pp., illus., $11.50).*

REVIEWED BY GEORGE PFEIFFER III

THE ABOVE HEADING is most unusual, for it not only refers to an autobiography of two people, but it also points out that this book is jointly issued by publishers in two states. Yet, the many hundreds of western history buffs, students, and professors who have known the Hafens as a team and as prolific writers will understand.

Seldom is history written by a skilled historian who actually experienced the times and places of which he writes. Hafen's father had been lured from Switzerland by the Mormons before the Civil War and had four wives and a great many children by the time LeRoy was born in the tiny town of Bunkerville, Nevada, in 1893.

The first third of this book vividly depicts life at the turn of the century in remote towns and agricultural areas of the West, and especially describes what life was like in a large polygamous family.

The second part is a graphic record of life in Utah, Idaho, and Nevada before, during, and following the Great Depression. It is also the story of a small-town Mormon boy growing up, going to college in the big city, getting married, and starting a noted career in history.

The last part of the book covers nearly every important historic place in the Far West, for it seems that no rutted road, mudhole, quicksand, or steep grade could stop the Hafens in their horse and buggy, in their first Ford, in their Essex, or in later vehicles, from traveling to all of the major, minor, and out-of-the-way places that interest readers of the American West.

This book spans the past seventy-five years of our West and the "greats" are commemorated on its pages, including Eugene Hollon, Ray Allen Billington, and many others who are no longer with us, such as the heroine of this unusual autobiography, Ann W. Hafen.

George Pfeiffer III *is publisher of* THE AMERICAN WEST.

The Narrative of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, translated by Fanny Bandelier, **with Oviedo's Version of the Lost Joint Report,** translated by Gerald Theisen *(Imprint Society, Barre, Mass., 1972; 271 pp., intro., illus., $35).*

REVIEWED BY W. H. HUTCHINSON

IT CAN BE SAID that the European history of the American West began with the incredible *entrada* of three Spaniards and one "Arab Negro" between the years 1528–36. This epic journey has received considerable scholarly and popular attention down through the years, but seldom has it been presented as beautifully as in the volume here considered.

The strength of this presentation of the journey rests in its use of the Bandelier translation, which reputable scholastics believe to be the best of the many made of de Vaca's own account, coupled with the inclusion in the same volume of Oviedo's version of the joint account presented by the three Spanish survivors to the *audiencia* who heard it. Never before, so it is claimed, have these two aspects of the journey been combined in a single volume for ready reference and comparison. And the Oviedo account has been translated afresh for its inclusion herein. The result is a book that should appeal strongly both to scholars and to those who have an aesthetic appreciation of truly fine bookmaking.

Neither this volume nor any of the others that have been produced about the journey—with one notable and suspect exception—deal with the *actual* ethnic origin of Estebán, or Estevanico, the "black man" who made the journey as the slave of one of the Spaniards involved. De Vaca refers to him as a "Arab Negro" from Azamoor, which is in Morocco. Now then, was he a man from Black Africa or was he from Arab Africa? What we badly need in these days of ethnic separatism is a clear definition, if such be possible, of what he was, that these ethnic fires may be diminished or fuelled. Hopefully, such a probing could finally lead to an appreciation of him as an individual, without regard to his pigmentation.

W. H. Hutchinson *is a professor of history at California State University, Chico, and is a contributing editor of* THE AMERICAN WEST.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

By Ed Holm

Death Valley Ghost Towns by Stanley W. Paher *(Nevada Publications, Las Vegas, 1973; 48 pp., illus., map, $4.95).*

Panamint, Calico, Rhyolite, Greenwater, Skidoo—and aptly-named Furnace—are a few of the exotic and now mostly-vanished mining camps described in this tour of North America's lowest, hottest, and dryest valley. Printed in large-format size with more than fifty rare photographs.

Looters of the Public Domain by S.A.D. Puter in collaboration with Horace Stevens *(Da Capo, New York, 1972; 496 pp., illus., $25.00).*

Written in his jail cell by the reformed "king of the Oregon land fraud ring," this 1907 blockbuster presents "a complete exposure of the fraudulent systems of acquiring titles to the public lands of the United States." A facsimile reprint.

Photographers of the New Mexico Territory, 1854–1912 compiled by Richard Rudisill *(Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, 1973; 74 pp., $3.00 paper).*

This comprehensive listing of photographers associated with the New Mexico Territory includes numerous brief biographies and will be a useful reference tool for Southwest historians. Its publication coincides with a major exhibition of early New Mexico photographs at the Palace of Governors, Santa Fe, which will continue through December.

Unwritten History: Life Among the Modocs by Joaquin Miller with an introduction by A. H. Rosenus *(Orion Press, Eugene, Ore., 1972; 400 pp., paper, $2.95).*

Joaquin Miller's autobiographical account of life among the miners and Indians in California's Mount Shasta area, first published in 1873, has been described by some as ranking with Herman Melville's *White Jacket*. Although Miller's principal fame was as a poet, he felt that if any of his works deserved to be remembered it was this one.

American Habitat: A Historical Perspective edited by Barbara Gutmann Rosenkrantz and William A. Koelsch *(Free Press, New York, 1973; 372 pp., illus., index, $10.00).*

This collection of seventeen essays representing three centuries of American thought about the environment is an effort by the editors to lend historical perspective to today's ecology movement. In their view, if man is to achieve a meaningful regulation of the environment for his lasting benefit—instead of unplanned exploitation—then he must understand his relationship to the land in the light of the past.

Land of the Coyote by Shirley Holmes Cochell as told by George Holmes Beine *(Iowa State University, Ames, 1972; 193 pp., $5.95).*

An entertaining and warmhearted account of homesteading in South Dakota in the early 1900s.

American Mountain People by the Special Publications Division of the National Geographic Society with photographs by Bruce Dale *(National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 1973; 200 pp., illus., maps, index, $4.75).*

A little more than half of this beautifully photographed and poetically designed and written volume is devoted to mountain people of Appalachia and the Ozarks, but there also are long chapters on the satisfying life western individualists have found in remote areas of the Colorado Rockies, in the Siskiyou Mountains of Oregon, and in Washington's Lake Chelan country.

History of the Canadian National Railways by G. R. Stevens *(Macmillan, New York, 1973; 538 pp., illus., maps, appen., notes, biblio., index, $12.95).*

A definitive history of America's largest railway from the pioneer days of the 1830s to the present. This is the ninth volume in a major series documenting the railroads of North America.

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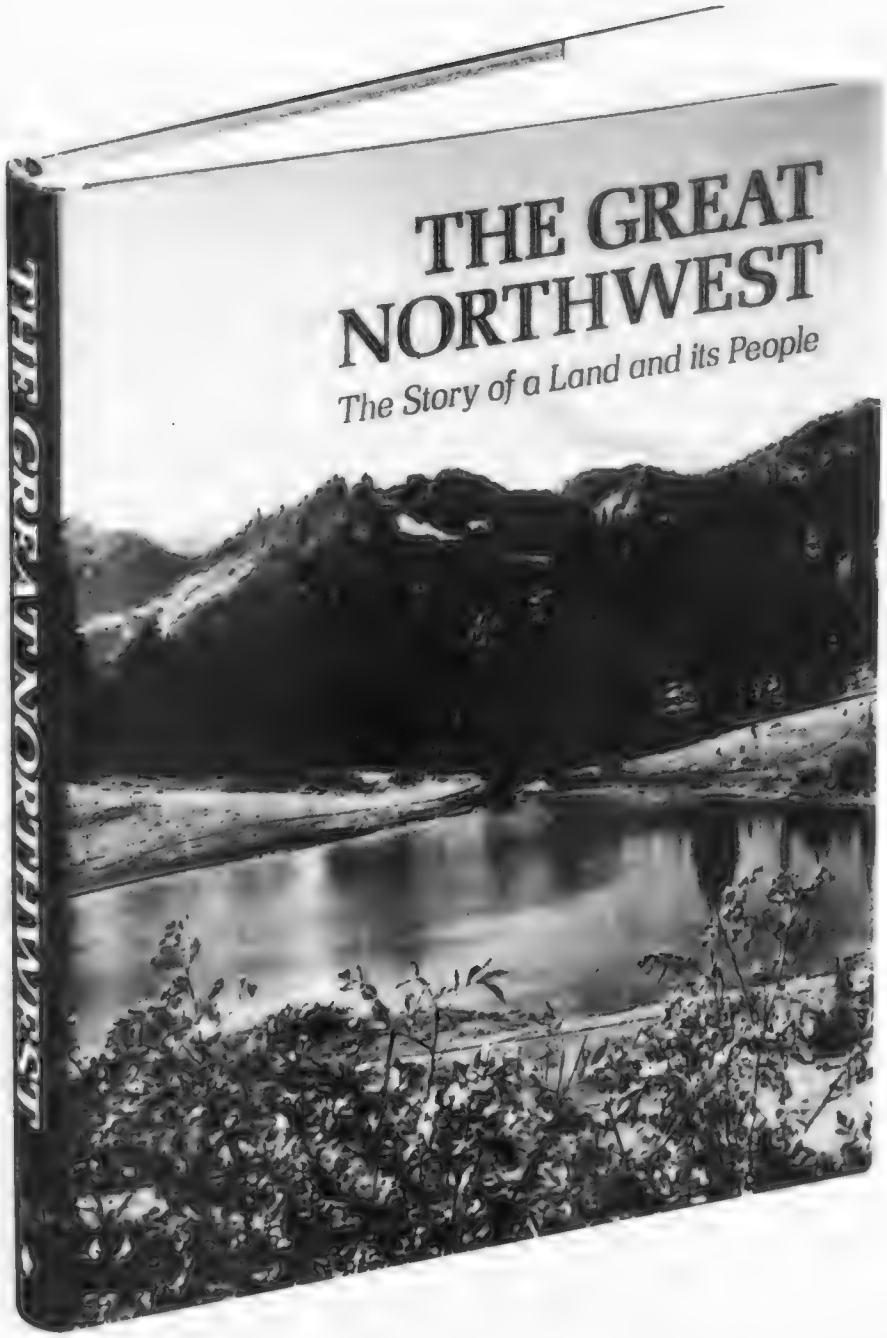

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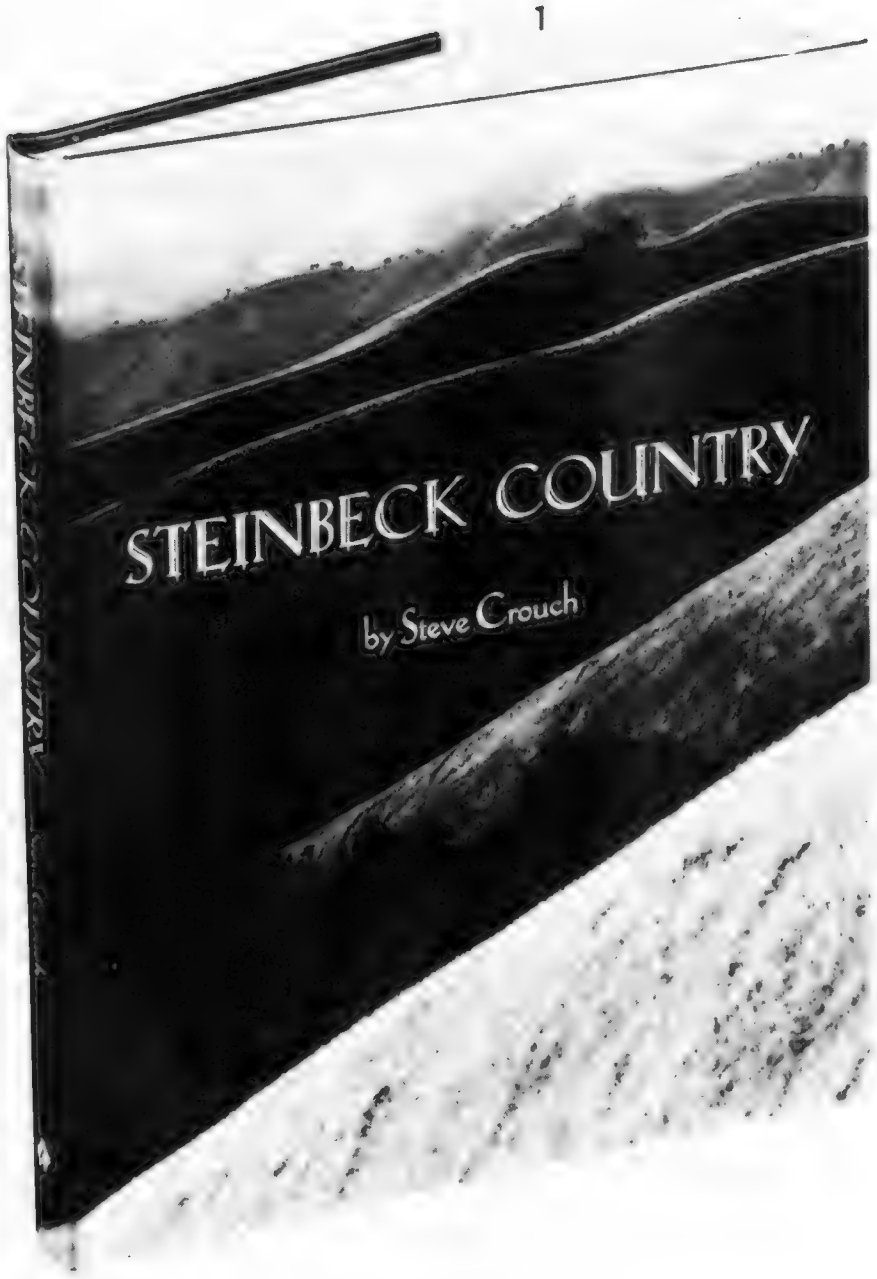

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THE SECOND TRAGEDY AT WOUNDED KNEE

(Continued from page 11)

from the vicinity of trouble, brought about a momentary change of heart, and the next day the Tetons docilely and lavishly entertained the explorers. This mood, however, changed arbitrarily within a few hours, and again only after another show of force did the expedition proceed safely upstream.

Describing the Tetons in a report written a few months later to Thomas Jefferson, Lewis, seldom one to use strong words, called them "the vilest miscreants of the savage race . . . [and] the pirates of the Missouri." After further enumerating the general characteristics and dealings of that tribe, he continued:

"Persuasion or advice with them is viewed as supplication, and only tends to inspire them with contempt for those who offer either. The tameness with which the traders of the Missouri have heretofore submitted to their rapacity, has tended not a little to inspire them with a poor opinion of the white persons who visit them through that channel. A prevalent idea, and one which they make a rule of their conduct is, that the more harshly they behave towards the traders, the greater the quantity of merchandise they will bring them, and that they will obtain the articles they wish on better terms.

During the next thirty years, a small army of merchants and adventurous travelers journeyed up the Missouri River, most having difficult encounters with the Tetons and most leaving generally uncomplimentary written accounts of those meetings. Among these travelers were Manuel Lisa, John Bradbury, Henry Brackenridge, and the German duke, Paul Wilhelm of Wuerttemberg, to name a few. And even George Catlin, that most sympathetic of all "savage watchers," recorded from his own 1832 experience with the Teton Sioux several incidents of intratribal strife and capricious behavior.

FROM THIS ACCUMULATION OF DATA, a rather specific pattern of early Teton Sioux character and behavior begins to emerge. Unfortunately, this information, no matter how objectively reconstructed, can hardly help receiving a leprosy-like welcome in certain segments of today's society. Historical reality, however, no matter how raw, remains unchanged by a sanctimonious reception. The reader who dismisses these descriptions as only cases of the white man's racism against Indians deludes himself, ostrich-like. If the second Wounded Knee situation is to be put into a perspective meaningful to the present, we dare not allow ourselves to be blinded by prevailing fictions regarding racism in history. To believe that every word written kindly about Indians is fact and that every word written unkindly is false is to believe in a fabricated myth—one equally as dangerous to objectivity and balance of perspective as the myth of a "super race." As biased and uncomplimentary as these quotations may be, they are in reality accounts of Teton Sioux situational behavior as observed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and such behavior was a reasonable and valid expression of the nomadic warrior culture to which the Tetons belonged at that time.

The pre-reservation Teton Sioux, being members of a warrior society, of necessity lived according to conduct rules designed to perpetuate those qualities that made for better warriors. Among such qualities were highly aggressive behavior, strong independence of personal actions, insensitivity to those outside the defined band or tribe, well-developed egocentricities, and concepts of property limited only to those within the tribal society itself. Is it any wonder that such behavior shocked merchants and travelers from an agrarian society descended from strong European and Puritanical origins?

The very early historic Teton Sioux never developed a strongly formulated structure of government. Their leadership systems instead remained fluid and subject to manipulation by those individuals reflecting the highest ideals of their warrior society. Their chieftainship structure, with its multiplicity of rival chiefs, developed partially from each band's necessity to disperse over a wide area for better hunting, and partially from the society's emphasis on strongly independent personal actions. This inevitably led to intense rivalries between opposing chiefs and their followers, and ultimately restricted the tribe's ability to take concerted action on any large unified scale. The situation at Wounded Knee, with its numerous warring factions and seemingly self-destructive intense struggle between rivals for leadership status, was virtually a carbon copy of *normal* Teton Sioux situational behavior of pre-reservation days.

In a warrior society, where social position depends almost solely on individual war-like actions, highly aggressive behavior becomes both an attention-getting device and a means of status improvement. Used in combination with cultural egocentricity and insensitivity to persons or property outside the band, aggressive behavior approaches the heights of virtue in a warrior society. Generally the more forceful such behavior becomes, the more attention and increased social status it will receive from the warrior society itself—especially if these actions are directed against persons or property outside the immediate band or peer group.

MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS PRE-RESERVATION Teton Sioux situational behavior were quite visible at Wounded Knee during its seventy days. The initial invasion of the village, the looting of the trading post, and the taking of captives all amounted to a display of contempt for authority outside the militant peer group. When the insurgents realized that the "feds" were not going to charge the bunkers as

threatened, their actions became bizarre attempts to outdo each other in brave blustering. The success of these taunts, plus the world attention that had been focused on the incident, helped turn the negotiating sessions into prolonged egotrips for the AIM leadership. In the main, these behavioral patterns continued in evidence until the take-over's success degenerated into stalemate, whereupon factions within the militants turned on each other.

These actions are clear examples of early Teton Sioux warrior society patterns of behavior. The braggadocian threats, each one generally more egocentric than the last, issued by the principal leaders of AIM sounded strikingly reminiscent of the situation described by both Trudeau in 1795 and Tabeau in 1803. The hostility and capricious behavior directed towards persons outside the immediate peer group appeared very similar to the experiences of Trudeau, Tabeau, McKay, and Lewis and Clark. The erratic maneuvering during the prolonged negotiations and the arbitrary abrogation of the first Wounded Knee settlement sounded remarkably like the same behavior described by both Trudeau and McKay. The paranoia underlying the seemingly endless lists of grievances aired at Wounded Knee equated strongly with the same situational behavior described by Trudeau and Tabeau. And the bitter internal strife that developed within the AIM group once their successes faltered is so characteristic of early tribal warrior behavior it can be found in virtually the entire range of source materials that deal with contact between the Teton Sioux and the Anglo-Americans.

On the basis of this evidence, it would appear that, in addition to other possible causes for the crisis at Wounded Knee, situational behavior patterns associated with the warrior society of the early historic Teton Sioux were, if not the major cause for the incident, at least instrumental in keeping the crisis from being resolved sooner. The politics of violent confrontation have been practiced in the past by those who wanted to bring about social change. The confrontation at Wounded Knee, however, created a new dimension in the practice of dissent: it marked the emergence of violence and irrationality as manifestations of a cultural way of life.

The appearance of this particular type of situational behavior at the second Wounded Knee represents a revival, not a continuation, of older warrior society values. When the American West came to the end of its exploration and fur trade phases and became host to a sedentary agrarian society, the warrior behavior patterns of the Teton Sioux became a serious personal and economic threat to the settlers. In answer to this problem, and both for their own protection and for the settler's safe-keeping, the High Plains Indians were moved onto reservations. There they experienced acculturation, and their older warrior society values, no longer having any social application, either vanished or became sublimated in their culture. Even as early as the first Wounded Knee tragedy in 1890, these warrior values, although still present to some degree in Sioux society, nevertheless played little significant part in that event. Only on rare occasions have such values appeared in any but highly atrophied forms among the reservation Indian people within the past two generations.

The leaders of the AIM organization most clearly exhibiting the manifestations of the older warrior behavior patterns at the modern Wounded Knee are not reservation Indians. They left those cradles of acculturation years ago and went to make their fortunes in the Anglo-American urban centers. Apparently, and no doubt through a complex process of cultural change best left to sociologists for explanation, while in contact with urban society they revived what they conceived to be behavioral patterns and social values of their ancient warrior ancestors. Supporting this thesis is the charter of the American Indian Movement itself, wherein that organization is actually called "the Red Man's International Warrior Society."

How these values came to be revived is as obscure as why they came into being. Since these traits are at best only subliminal in reservation society and therefore not easily discernable or learned, the source influencing the revival probably came from outside existing Teton Sioux reservation society. It is possible, of course, that the reaction to a different social system may have resulted in a totally unconscious exhibition of the older warrior behavior patterns. It is also possible that these patterns may have been suggested by an exposure to Indian history gained from reading that history as witnessed by Anglo-Americans such as Trudeau, Tabeau, McKay, Lewis and Clark, and others.

However and for whatever reason these values came back into being, rampantly resurrected they were at the second Wounded Knee. And most successful they were against a confused, shocked, and frustrated federal government!

DESPITE THE EXTENSIVE NEWS COVERAGE accorded the incident at Wounded Knee, many of its aspects and events will remain hidden for some time to come—possibly forever. Most of the official reports, documents, and photographs have been placed beyond the reach of the researcher pending the outcome of litigation stemming from the event. That may take years to conclude. Information from the militant side of the story has already become encrusted with rumor, rationalization, and boastful aggrandizement. By no means has the definitive history of Wounded Knee's recent events been written; however, some evaluation of the incident and its relation to the rest of the Indian world should be made on the basis of the perspective we already have, slim though this may be. This writer would like, therefore, to present a few observations on this topic.

First: The reversion to pre-reservation warrior society behavior patterns at Wounded Knee is not likely to produce any lasting benefits for the rest of the Indian people. The reason for this is economic in nature.

More than 90 percent of America's Indian people live on

reservations, and most of these are frightfully poverty stricken. If these Indian people are to be given the opportunity to develop a decent lifestyle—indeed, if they are even to survive as a recognizable cultural entity into the twenty-first century—then these reservations must be made economically self-sufficient. To do this, two sources of funding are available. One is from the federal government, and the other is the private business community.

By its very nature, the federal bureaucracy, through its relationship with Congress, is somewhat responsive to the will of the people. The great majority of those people who constitute the American vote have Anglo-American views on social behavior. These views include a well developed concept of property and property rights, an acceptance of legal and governmental authority, and an expectancy of gratitude in return for assistance.

There is no evidence to suggest that any of these three concepts was included among the older Teton Sioux social values, nor is there reason to believe that these concepts were held in high regard by the insurgents at Wounded Knee. The bicultural clash of these values has generally been at the root of "the Indian problem" since first contacts, but almost always it has been the Anglo-American culture, not that of the Indian, that ultimately determined the outcome. This case is not likely to be much different in the long run, and if the warrior society values persist, to the annoyance of the American electorate, one can foresee that electorate applying pressure to the Congress to stop such "Indian bothersomes." And since the only thing Indian within control of the Congress happens to be the reservations, not the militants, it will unfortunately be these groups of Indian people who will be disciplined by a sparing of the governmental dollar. In effect, this will simply cause the Indian reservations to dry up economically and parch in the High Plains sun.

Whereas the federal government has to learn, to a certain extent, to live with an irritatingly different value system, the business community does not. Industry goes only where there are profits, and if reservation areas can be made profitably attractive to business interests, industry will locate there and economic self-sufficiency be closer. Where those profits do not exist, or are in danger of being destroyed, burnt down, or taken over by insurgents acting according to their own concept of how long-dead ancestors acted, major business interests are not likely to show much enthusiasm. Already the Wounded Knee situation has hindered economic and industrial growth on South Dakota reservations, and until the Indian political climate stabilizes considerably, that growth probably will not resume. Until it does, hopes for a decent future for the reservation Indian people continue to stagnate.

Second: The take-over of the tiny hamlet of Wounded Knee succeeded in catapulting the AIM organization into a strong political position of leadership within the Indian world. A massive army of federal marshals, representing the might of the federal government, was checked and held at bay by that organization. The much-publicized AIM demands, despite their irrationality, were negotiated and somewhat meekly catered to. The existing tribal government on the Pine Ridge Reservation, a target of strong AIM attack and resentment, was virtually paralyzed and intensely embarrassed before its own constituency. And the Pine Ridge people, living as they do in a society where force is a necessary attribute of stable government, view the inconclusive termination of the Wounded Knee affair as a victory for AIM and a mockery for both the tribal and federal government.

In the face of this, should it come as a surprise to learn that more and more Indian people, with real or imagined frustrations at their way of life, are turning to the AIM organization for leadership? And should it seem incredible that, having seen the results of AIM's resurrected warrior behavior, more and more Indian people may assume that style of behavior? Under these circumstances, Indian self-determination in the future could easily become a most difficult situation with which to live. The non-Indian generally has taken for granted that Indian future will develop along lines compatible with Anglo-American values and goals. That idyllic notion may vaporize in the face of growing reassertion of self-determination with distinctly older Indian values. Such a disillusive awakening could produce a reaction that might ultimately prove tragic to the Indian people as a whole.

Third: Prospects are dim that the AIM organization can effectively negotiate with the federal government to the benefit of the entire Indian population. The aggressive behavior and strong egocentricity of the revived warrior values function best when there is something to hate, and because of real or unreal grievances, the AIM leadership clearly hates the federal government. What is more, all white men tend to be included in this hatred. Aside from being Indian racism against whites, a situation no more justifiable than white racism against Indians, this mental attitude over-colors issues and creates devils where in reality there are none. For the first time in many years, the eyes and ears of the federal government turned full attention to "the Indian problem," and the American Indian, personified by the insurgents, stood in a strong bargaining position. Unfortunately, the hate blazing from the village of Wounded Knee clouded the foresight necessary to take best advantage of that position, and in this case at least, the very success of the warrior revival defeated the purpose for which it had been revived.

In addition to hate, another detrimental attitude was also prevalent in the AIM approach to negotiations. In a warrior society where emphasis is placed on aggressive behavior, nonaggressive inaction is unlikely to be respected, and the federal posture of containment instead of provocation accordingly earned contempt from the insurgents. An example of this attitude can be found in the conduct of Russell Means, who, after being released by a federal judge on restricted bail terms, blatantly ignored those restrictions.

Fourth: The social mechanism that offers the most hope for solving the problems facing the reservation Indian people is the very mechanism most threatened by the revival of social

behavior patterns valid within a nomadic, buffalo-hunting, tribal warrior culture. This is the already functioning viable democratic processes on each reservation.

As has been amply demonstrated over the past fifty years, in this process lies the means for real Indian self-determination in a manner most acceptable to the majority of Indian people. Here also is the major link between the culture of the Indian and that of the non-Indian. On this level, painfully slow though it may seem to some, is the mechanism for meshing the two cultures in a manner most likely to benefit both.

Into this situation has intruded the American Indian Movement, an organization not democratically representative of a constitutionally organized Indian reservation government. The capture of Wounded Knee came at the height of a bitter controversy between the leadership of AIM and the elected tribal government of the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation. The publicity generated by the take-over of the village further intensified this struggle, and certain aspects of it became bitter, brutal, and even deadly. The stated position of AIM leadership was the total ouster of the elected tribal officials and their replacement with persons designated by the American Indian Movement. In this they may yet succeed. The weakening of the Oglala Sioux tribal government of the Pine Ridge Reservation, its loss of prestige with its constituency, and the corresponding growth of AIM power on that reservation as a result of the Wounded Knee affair makes the capitulation of the Pine Ridge tribal government almost a certainty.

This situation affords an interesting contrast with the Black movements of the past two decades. In the world of the Blacks, the militant movements gave rise to a Black constitutionality which, in growing strong, supplanted to a great degree the militant movements themselves. In the Indian world, this process is operating in reverse. It is now an Indian militant movement that is in the process of subverting the already established and relatively viable Indian constitutionality. The ultimate goal of this intra-tribal struggle is the command of federal funds, and hence the manipulation of Indian future. If the American Indian Movement can sustain the strong leadership status which it has gained, then control of Indian destiny is likely to pass from those Indian people who have had a democratic process in action for almost fifty years to a group whose aims, motives, and cultural background do not reflect the majority of Indian thought.

Ironically, it was the action of the federal authority in containing the violence, enforcing the blockade, preventing serious bloodshed, and relegating the Pine Ridge Sioux tribal government to an ineffective position that created the atmosphere for drastic alteration, perhaps even destruction, of democratically constituted Indian tribal governments. Should the Wounded Knee pattern be repeated on other reservations, and should AIM be successful in gaining control of those tribal governments, then the only mechanism proven effective for translating into reality true Indian self-determination acceptable to the majority of Indian people will be seriously crippled, if not crushed.

Fifth: In the late nineteenth century, the Teton Sioux, expressing what were even at that time anachronistic tribal cultural behavior patterns, joined in the Ghost Dance movement then sweeping the High Plains. Federal authority, reflecting the temper of the times, reacted strongly and forcibly, and the culmination was the first and bloody tragedy at Wounded Knee. In 1973, there was again an angry outbreak of collective frustration at Wounded Knee, likewise expressed in anachronistic cultural terms, this time as revived warrior society behavior and values. That the federal authority did not this time react in a manner to produce bloodshed suggests that perhaps modern American culture has come some distance towards racial toleration and reasonability. It also suggests that certain Indian groups, in an effort to gain more power and control over their destiny, have turned to dangerously outmoded cultural expressions—expressions which, if continued, may well mean the death of their culture. That this possibility has been brought about by a revival of "the old way of life"—that is, the early Teton Sioux warrior cultural values—is perhaps the ultimate tragedy of the second Wounded Knee.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

With federal materials on the Wounded Knee take-over inaccessible and militant information so spare in veracity, a heavy dependence had to be placed on news media accounts in researching this article. The *Rapid City Journal* proved a major resource as that newspaper was in daily contact with Wounded Knee and provided continuous coverage of the event from its inception to end. A number of other newspapers were also combed for information as were the major news magazines.

Also consulted were a number of Indian newspapers. These included "The First Month at Wounded Knee," a special edition of *Akwesasne Notes* (published by the Mohawk Nation, Rooseveltown, New York); *Crazy Horse News* (published non-tribally on the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation, South Dakota); *Sota Eya Ye Yapi* (published by the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe on the Lake Traverse Reservation, South Dakota); and *Wassaja: A National Newspaper For Indian America* (no tribal affiliation).

Historical resources include material from the *South Dakota Historical Collections, Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin for 1915, Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States, Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,* and *Tabeau's Narrative of Louisel's Expedition to the Upper Missouri.*

Materials on the Wounded Knee event were also furnished by the offices of South Dakota's two U.S. senators, George McGovern and James Abourezk, as well as by the office of South Dakota congressman, James Abdnor.

Considerable data was also gained from several visits to the site of the conflict and through interviews with those there who would discuss it. The author's description of the damages to the village is based on personal observations in the area soon after the militants left. Assistance from officials in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Department of the Interior, and the Department of Justice is gratefully acknowledged.

Clyde D. Dollar *is a research historian specializing in the nineteenth-century American West at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion. He is the author of numerous articles in professional journals and for three years worked and lived on the Rosebud, South Dakota, Indian Reservation as historian for the tribe.*

THE STRIFE AND STRUGGLE OF A NEWSPAPER IN THE OLD WEST

(Continued from page 47)

pected to be a good advertiser: "M. D. Thatcher received nineteen heavy wagon loads of freight on Friday last. He now has a splendid stock of goods."

When the last of the first issue was off the press, the editor-in-chief broke out bottles. Everyone felt pretty good about the paper; they felt even better after they had properly toasted the new enterprise. Several went out in front and stood under the new sign while Stephen S. Smith took their picture. It was a glorious day, and the doctor was elated. The noise of the press had sounded as good to him as that first cry of a newborn babe.

Volume 1, Number 1, of the *Colorado Chieftain* was an unmistakable success. Denver's *Rocky Mountain News,* in a lead editorial in its June 5 edition said, "We are constrained to compliment the enterprising proprietors on its handsome appearance and the quality of its matter, original and selected. It fills a long felt want in Southern Colorado and we predict for it success." The *Tribune* and *Gazette* also took note, and numerous citizens either wrote complimentary letters or called the *Chieftain* office to express their approval.

IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, the *Chieftain* went along about as expected. The board of editors wrote, the doctor practiced medicine and contributed articles and solicited subscriptions and printing to support the enterprise, Sam worried, and Leonard got drunk. McBride's letters, which came in multiples on every coach when the editor-in-chief was in Trinidad, give an intimate picture of a pioneer western newspaper fighting for survival:

"Dear Sir: We are getting along pretty well in the office, but I am dunned on every occasion for money. Last night I paid the tender for the plasterers the sum of $9.00 and everybody you owe wants something. When you write me again tell me what understanding you had with the plasterers. I thought the thirty dollars covered the whole bill, but they say not. . . . The people here are getting quite patriotic this morning. The Stars and Stripes are floating over The Pueblo House and preparations are being made for a picnic tomorrow evening [July 4]. . . . I do not expect to attend, owing chiefly to my low state of finances."

"Dear Sir: I have nothing of importance to write you this evening except Leonard is on a general drunk and I am almost sick from the effects of hard work. I do not suppose Leonard will work any more for a week as it usually takes him that long to get off a spree. It will be very hard on Crooks and myself to get the paper out on time."

"Dear Doctor: We are getting along pretty well with the exception that money is played out. I had expected to hear from you by the last two coaches. Please send me some money. It is impossible to run the office without it and it don't come in here fast enough to do much good. What time do you expect to be back?"

"Dear Doctor: . . . I have had to work almost day and night to get the paper out and barely succeed. Leonard is on a big drunk and I almost had to kill myself on that account. But I have discharged him now and tomorrow I expect to have another printer from Denver, one who does not get drunk. Doc, I want you to collect some money and send over by Monday's coach to pay Leonard. There is about eighty ($80) due him and I haven't a dollar to pay him. The subscribed loans and work on the office have taken up nearly all the first quarter's advertising so times are very hard with me. Send over money enough to pay Leonard as I want to get rid of him as soon as possible. I mean I want to get him out of town. I am afraid to leave the office unless Crooks or someone else is in it for fear he will do some mischief. . . ."

Money or no money, the *Chieftain* was informative and fun to read. It ran serious, if somewhat bloodthirsty and one-sided, articles on the Indian problem and carried stories on Negro riots in the South, science, medicine, and other topics. The editor-in-chief wrote a summary of an *Atlantic Monthly* article that he found interesting and personally relevant: it contended that "too many surgeons" during the late war in their haste amputated for trifling wounds and took too much of limb. The *Chieftain* ran many articles on the Pueblo area, its geography, peoples, and potentialities. Beshoar wrote a number of these, digging into the life of the Pueblo Indians, their customs, and ways. Often the paper ran short items that caused merriment throughout the territory; for example: "It will be seen by reference to our election returns that Hon. Wilbur F. Stone defeated Dick Wootton for district attorney by a majority of 1,249 although Dick is one of the oldest practitioners at the bar in the territory." A substantial number of *Chieftain* readers had either seen the aging mountain man and proprietor of the Raton Pass tollgate at work on a bottle in a saloon or knew of his prowess in this line.

The fun wasn't limited to the local scene by any means. In a comment on the growing scandals of the national administration, *Chieftain* said: "Grant called on Mr. Commissioner Rollins a few days since to inquire who are the thieves who are plundering the government. It is said the answer will make a closely printed volume somewhat larger than Webster's Unabridged Dictionary."

THE CHIEFTAIN CONTINUED TO BE A WORRY to its editor-in-chief, as it was a constant drain on his resources throughout the fall and early winter of 1868-69. Everyone wanted money. He doled his dollars out to those who dunned him the hardest. He had drug suppliers to pay, paper houses, clerks, printers, rent on the house in Trinidad he was using as a combined residence and office, rent on his office in

Pueblo, and livery charges in both Pueblo and Trinidad.

Then, late in December, Sam McBride said he had enough. He had worked long and hard; and while he had a place to sleep and enough food and his health had improved, even as the physician had promised, the lack of profits had kept him from receiving any salary. Beshoar agreed that the best thing they could do at this moment was to dissolve their arrangement. Sam wrote in the January 7, 1869, *Chieftain* that his health would not permit continued confinement in the office, and the editor-in-chief wrote in the same issue: "We part from our late associate with feelings of deep regret and deplore the necessity which forces him into retiring from the business."

Against the possibility that Sam might fold up or take off, the physician had long had an understanding with the printers' union in Denver that it would find and send a good, temperate man if he ever had need for a foreman. Years later, in a banquet address, Beshoar told fellow editors about what happened when Sam departed:

"I telegraphed by the Denver and Santa Fe telegraph line to the printers' union for a good, all-around man. He came promptly on Jones' jerky line [and was] no less a personage than R. M. Stevenson.

"After a hurried breakfast at the Hiney Hotel, Stevenson hastened to his new field of occupation. We never locked the door of that office dormitory. There was no occasion for locking. When he entered, he stared at the assorted revolvers and carbines hanging on the bunks and walls. I was just beginning to pantaloon myself, which is an athletic exercise in an upper bunk. Whether he saw me or not I don't know to this day, but he passed right through to the main room, which served all the purposes of the press, composing, job printing, and carpentry departments. In the center of this big room was a large wood stove of the box pattern with extemporized seats on either side. The stove was red hot and the devil had gone to the next building to cook the *Chieftain* people's breakfast.

"Well, when I had finished my toilet, which was mostly putting on a pair of jeans pants and two government boots, one No. 6 square toed and a No. 7 round toed (washing and combing being an after consideration), I walked into the big room and took the seat opposite the stranger and began to contemplate the object before me. He was a stately gentleman of superior personal appearance—muchly of the royal English type.

"Presently he gave me a somewhat contemptuous glance and inquired when the editor would be in. I told him the editor was in right then. He said he wanted to see him as soon as he came in. I said, 'Now suppose you take a good square look at me.' He said 'No, I want to see the editor.' It took me some time to convince him that I was the man he was looking for. He at once pulled off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and went to work."

Stevenson was all that McBride was not. He could write, he was a good printer, and he had a good business head on him. Within a few weeks the *Chieftain* was healthier than it had ever been. It was, to Beshoar's delight, making money; not much, but a little.

Fearful that Stevenson might leave or get shot or suffer some other calamity, the physician decided he would sell the newspaper while it was in the black and get out of Pueblo completely. He liked Trinidad better and he had a hunch that someday coal would make Trinidad an important city.

Stevenson had talent, charm, and ambition—and no money and no way of acquiring any. But Sam McBride, who had been working in a political job since leaving the *Chieftain*, thought he'd like to be back in the newspaper business if he could raise some capital. The physician thought Sam's prospects poor, but to his surprise McBride managed to raise sufficient cash for a satisfactory down payment and was willing to sign notes, one to fall due every three months until the balance was paid. Although the figures were satisfactory, Beshoar insisted McBride secure a satisfactory co-signer. After some scrambling around, Sam got Jacob Dotson, a substantial rancher, to sign with him, and the deal was consummated. On March 10, 1869, Michael Beshoar bade his baby and the Pueblo public goodby with a "valedictory" on the front page of the *Chieftain*.

As might be expected, Sam McBride didn't last long; there wasn't anyone he could write to for money. He sold the *Chieftain* in June 1870 to Capt. John J. Lambert, quartermaster at Fort Reynolds. The captain's brother, Nicholas N. Lambert, was entrusted with the conduct of the paper until the captain got out of the army in 1872. He converted it to a daily in May of that year.

Sam, active in Masonic and civic affairs, went into the insurance business with W. J. Woodworth and, under the firm name of Sam McBride & Co., sold insurance for seven national and international insurance companies "representing" so he claimed, $40,000,000 solid insurance assets. He held a number of jobs and political offices and made one more effort in the newspaper business with an eight-page monthly devoted exclusively to advertising. But Sam McBride's *Advertiser*, born in May 1872, died quietly and unnoticed in August 1873. Sticking with political offices until 1876, Sam was easily one of the most popular men in Pueblo. In that year as treasurer of the Pueblo school district, he had custody of $14,000 the district had voted for a new school building. Sam went east and took the money with him. Everyone was loath to believe what seemed probable. It was kept quiet for several weeks, but finally the story broke, appropriately enough in the *Chieftain* under the heading "Have You Seen Sam?" No one had, and no one ever did again.

Barron Beshoar *is the grandson of frontier doctor Michael Beshoar. A native of Trinidad, Colorado, he is a former reporter for several major newspapers and has been a correspondent and bureau chief with* Time, Life, *and* Fortune. *In addition to his new book,* Hippocrates in a Red Vest, *Mr. Beshoar is author of* Out of the Depths, *a biography of Colorado mine labor leader John R. Lawson.*

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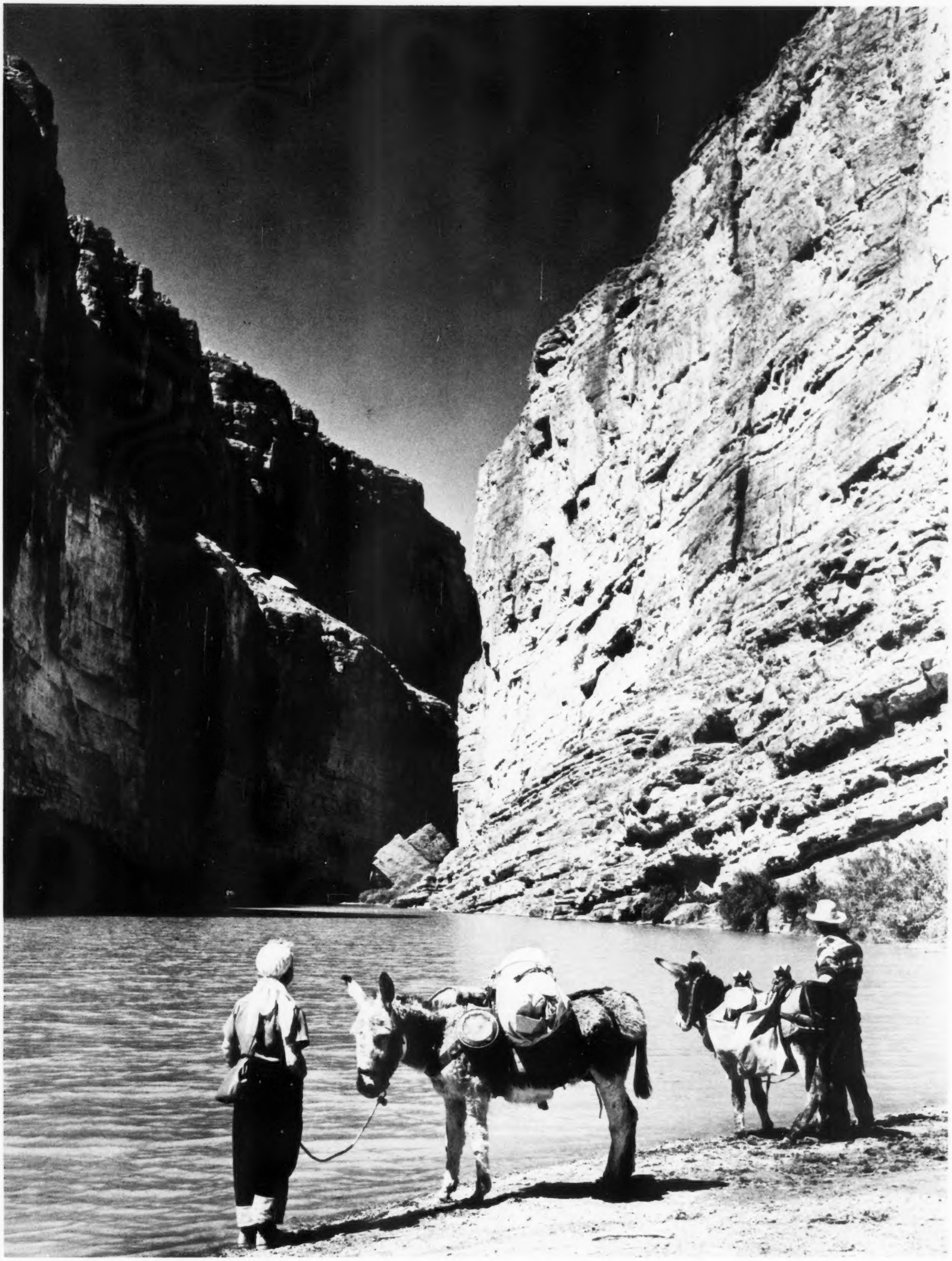
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